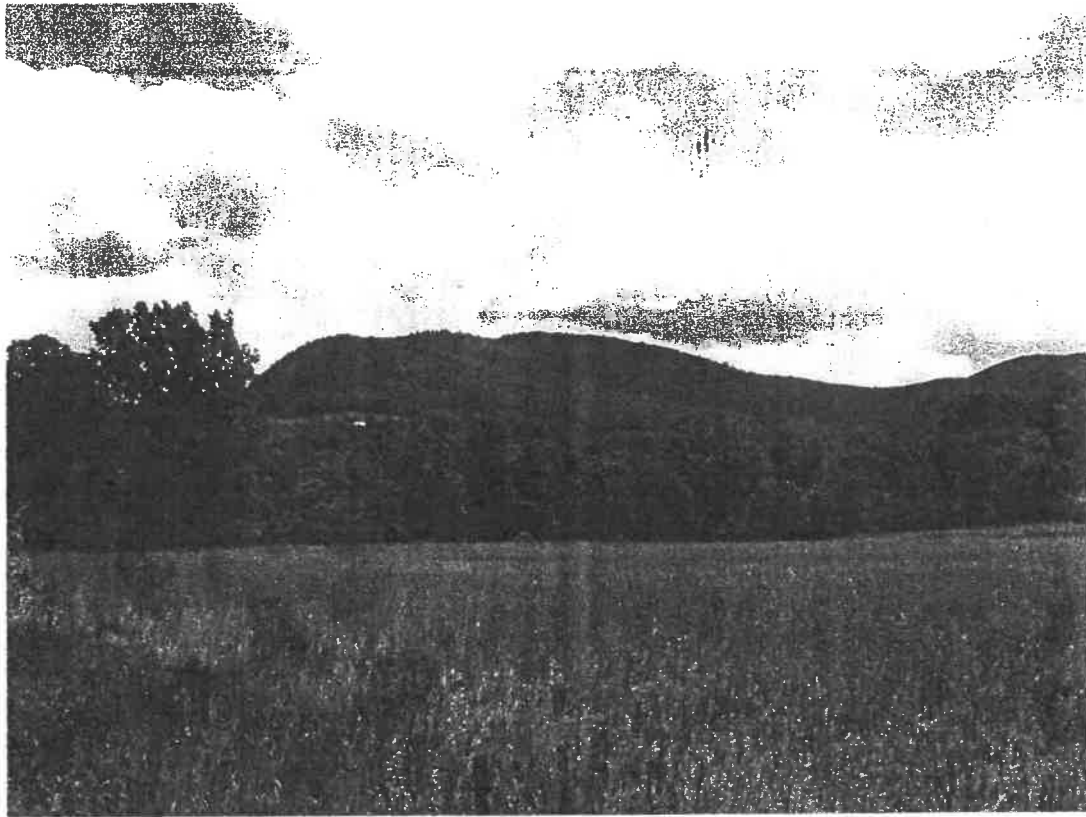


Open Space and Recreation Plan



For the Town of Egremont, Massachusetts

MARCH 2001

This plan was developed with funding from
the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

EGREMONT OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

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I. PLAN SUMMARY

The *2000 Egremont Open Space and Recreation Plan* has been developed in recognition of the fact that the protection of open space and natural resources and the provision of recreational opportunities are key aspects of the community's quality of life. To this end, the Plan is intended to document the Town's most valuable natural and community resources, and outline goals for their protection and enhancement. It includes a comprehensive inventory of the town's natural resources and protected areas, including wildlife habitat, scenic views, open space, and farmland. It also lists natural resource and open space goals, developed with extensive public input, concluding with a five-year Action Plan with specific management recommendations. Some of the most compelling findings of this study are:

1. Egremont's most defining quality is its small-town, rural New England character. Residents have consistently said that the landscape—a unique pattern of farm fields, forested hillsides, winding rural roads, and historic villages—is the aspect of the town most important to preserve for the future.
2. Egremont is home to at least thirty-five state-listed rare species not found in most of the State. These species are irreplaceable aspects of the Town's natural heritage and need to be safeguarded for the future.
3. Ongoing efforts by state and local boards and organizations have increased the level of protection for many of the Town's most significant natural places. These efforts include state designation of the Karner Brook Area of Critical Environmental Concern, and the permanent legal protection of almost 2,700 acres of open space. The Open Space and Recreation Plan recommends continuing conservation of rare-species habitat, including the expansion of buffers surrounding the most significant and vulnerable areas.
4. Despite this extensive inventory of protected open space, some of the most scenic and characteristic places in Egremont, including large portions of agricultural land on Baldwin Hill, remain largely vulnerable to development. The Town's clusters of active farmland are particularly threatened, as they are often more easily developed than other areas. Throughout Berkshire County, farms are disappearing rapidly. Greater community support and protection of Egremont's farms is advisable if they are to continue to play a vital role in the Town's landscape and economy.
5. Residential development on steep slopes and hillsides is increasing, and has the potential to mar scenic views and cause erosion and other environmental problems. Egremont should consider limiting and/or reviewing more closely building in higher elevations and slopes.
6. Egremont offers numerous opportunities for outdoor recreation in its parks and forests. Many residents enjoy the beauty of the natural landscape through recreation such as walking, hiking, cycling, or birdwatching. One type of activity that residents would like to have better access to is swimming, possibly at Prospect Lake. The expansion of the existing French Park Committee to deal with this and other recreational needs of the Town may improve the options available for residents in the future.

II. INTRODUCTION

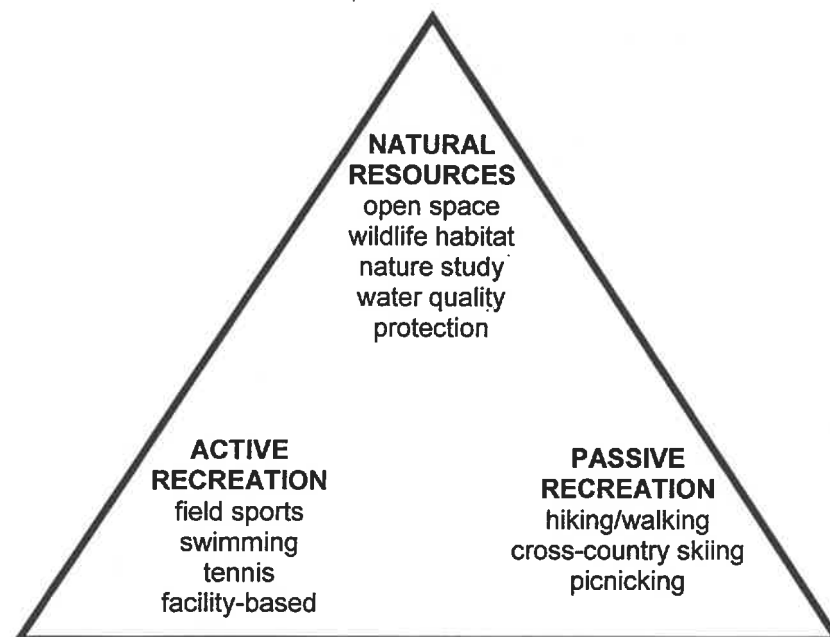
A. Statement of Purpose

The *2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan* reflects Egremont's commitment to protect, preserve, and enhance its rural character, natural resources, and recreational opportunities. In the twelve years since the last Open Space and Recreation Plan was completed, the Town has faced increasing development pressures, without a framework to preserve the characteristics that contribute to its current high quality of life. It is the intent of the concurrent Master and Open Space and Recreation Plan process to document the Town's natural assets and the needs of its community, and to help direct development in a fashion that respects the character of the community and the environment.

B. What is Open Space and Why is It Important?

"Open space" is usually conceived of as conservation land that is permanently protected from development. While this is true in many cases, for the purpose of this Plan the term also carries a broader definition, to include wildlife sanctuaries, forests, conservation land, private and public recreation areas, cemeteries, and historical properties. Open space is usually undeveloped, although this is not always the case. It includes land used for agriculture and recreation, and sometimes places that are of historical interest to the community. They can be actively used public areas where people can explore, walk their dogs, or play soccer, as well as privately held land that provides passersby with scenic views but no public access. Open space comprises an important component of community character, and its maintenance and preservation are essential to the community's quality of life.

What is an open space and recreation plan?



C. Planning Process and Participation

In 1998, the Egremont and Mount Washington Planning Boards worked with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) to secure a growth management planning grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA). Egremont had not updated its town plans since the 1988 Open Space and Recreation Plan and the Egremont Land Use Plan of 1976. Prior to this process, Mount Washington had never completed a Master Plan or an Open Space and Recreation (OSR) Plan. Preparation of the Plans was also funded with \$3,000 from the Town and through in-kind services from the town and other organizations.

In June of 1999, volunteer Steering Committees in the Towns of Mount Washington and Egremont began efforts to develop Master and Open Space and Recreation plans for both towns with the assistance of BRPC.

For both towns, the project was intended to help to direct development in a fashion that respects the character of the communities and the environment. The specific goals of this project were:

- 1) To develop up-to-date community master plans and open space/recreation plans for both Mount Washington and Egremont that address pertinent growth management, environmental, economic and community character concerns;
- 2) To develop sub-regional growth policies, based on both town planning efforts, the Regional Plan for the Berkshires and supporting memoranda of agreement among these communities, adjoining communities, and the BRPC regarding developments of regional interests and areas of critical planning concern.

The goal of the Egremont Steering Committee was to draft these Plans based on the town's shared vision for its future. Throughout the process, they actively solicited inputs of all town residents, property owners, and taxpayers. They examined existing conditions within the town, recent changes, needs, opportunities, and alternatives. They considered such factors as: population characteristics, housing, development patterns and land use, natural resources and open space, recreation, cultural and historical resources, and, public services, facilities, and infrastructure.

The volunteer Steering Committee of Egremont residents, with the help of BRPC, created and distributed a four-page Community Survey as a first step toward learning resident opinions about the town and its future. The surveys were distributed to 952 town resident addresses with an enclosed envelope. With 396 surveys returned, the survey had a 42% response rate, exceptional for residential surveys of this nature. BRPC compiled the responses and submitted the results to the Steering Committee, who used the results to help set goals and frameworks for the Plans. For more details on the survey results, please see Appendix A.

A Community Visioning Workshop, facilitated by Joel Russell of Woodlea Associates in April 2000, helped expand upon the results of the survey and pointed Steering Committee members toward a course of action. Small, focused breakout group discussions and a broader large-group discussion produced very valuable information for the planning process. There was a great deal of agreement on the issues and challenges Egremont faces, and some general agreement that the Town should take action to address them. Input from the workshop helped to further refine the information gathered via the survey.

During this time, Steering Committee members and BRPC continued to meet in order to revise the goals, discuss Open Space and Recreation needs and strategies, and review sections of the draft document. A sub-regional meeting to discuss Open Space and Recreation strategies was held in May 2000, and included officials from Egremont, Mount Washington, Great Barrington, and Sheffield, as well as members of environmental organizations and state agencies.

A preliminary draft of the Open Space and Recreation Plan was completed in July 2000. It was reviewed by the Steering Committee and distributed to key town boards and organizations for comments and commitments to the Action Plan.

III. COMMUNITY SETTING

A. Regional Context

The town of Egremont is located in the southwest section of the state and Berkshire County. Its location in the southern Berkshires, its rural character and outdoor recreation opportunities have long made Egremont a popular location for vacationers and second homeowners, particularly from the New York City metropolitan area. The town has historic rural New England Villages in both South and North Egremont.

The immediate sub-regional area is a uniquely valuable environment full of natural beauty. Forested areas in Egremont such as Jug End Mountain, extensive agricultural lands including Baldwin Hill, scenic roads, and critical watershed and wetlands habitat resources such as Karner Brook are treasured highly by residents. In the last decade a great deal has been accomplished toward the protection and management of environmental resources and open spaces, spearheaded by both by local and regional organizations.

The Town encompasses 18.87 square miles, or 12,075 acres. On its boundaries are the Towns of Alford and Great Barrington to the north and east, Sheffield to the east and south, and Mount Washington to the south. The New York towns of Hillsdale and Copake lie along the western border. Egremont is approximately 140 miles west of Boston and 125 miles north of New York City.

As the key western access point into the Southern Berkshires from the very highly populated New York City metro area, Egremont is well positioned to participate in the County's strong tourism sector and second home market. These two economic sectors have been growing in importance in both Egremont and the County as a whole.

Egremont's population trend historically mirrored that of South Berkshire County until recent decades. South Berkshire County, defined basically as all communities south of the Massachusetts Turnpike, has experienced increasing population in every decade since mid-century, including the 1990's. Egremont comprises approximately 6% of South Berkshire County's population of approximately 21,000.

Housing in Egremont is not expensive when compared to Boston, Hartford, and most importantly the New York City metropolitan area. However, these areas have a much higher average income level than is generated in Berkshire County. What this means is that housing in Egremont is attractive to the vast and wealthy New York City market and this influx of dollars into the local and sub-regional housing market is raising overall real estate prices, while creating an affordability challenge to many longtime town residents and families.

While Egremont shares many of the characteristics of neighboring towns, it stands apart in its agricultural nature, its dual villages, and its close-knit rural community.



B. History of the Community

Egremont was permanently settled in 1730 by Dutch settlers who bought land from the Native American Indians of the Mahican tribe who lived near Jug End. In 1775 the Town of Egremont was incorporated. Egremonters were very active in the American Revolution, and also fought in Shay's Rebellion.¹ North Egremont—known as Little York until 1787—was the first stop of the famous Knox Trail in Massachusetts.

By 1800, Egremont was a flourishing farming community, with gristmills, saw mills and cider mills on its various brooks, a Congregational Church and eight taverns. When the Industrial Age began, small factories also were established in South Egremont, strategically situated on the Turnpike between Albany and Hartford. By 1850, the Population was 1,013, exactly the same as it was to be in 1965. With the disappearance of much of the base of the small industry in the late 19th and early 20th century, the population in Egremont steadily declined, shrinking to 441 in 1920. Population rose slowly but steadily in Egremont after 1920, due in part to the increased mobility offered by the automobile.

There are three concentrations of historic structures in Egremont, the largest by far being in South Egremont, followed by North Egremont and Egremont Plain. The South Egremont Village Historic District, placed on the National Register of Historic places in 1984, is a blending of historic residential, public, and commercial uses that serves as a social and economic center. It features traditional New England architecture and public buildings, prominent churches, and various stores and businesses. The North Egremont Historic District, placed on the Register in 1989, is a smaller historic village that boasts many similar traits. Refer to the Egremont Master Plan, History & Cultural Resources Section, for more information.

C. Population Characteristics

Egremont is a relatively small and stable community with a strong contingent of long time residents and families as well as significant numbers of seasonal, part time and newer residents. Egremont's year round population declined from 1,311 in 1980 to 1,229 in 1990 due to decreasing household size and low birth rates. The year round population is estimated to have been very stable in the 1990s. It is estimated that there are approximately 900 seasonal residents. In addition, the visitor population can swell during the summer due to vacationing tourists.

The median age rose to nearly 40 in 1990, considerably higher than the state and county median, but not unusual for towns in the south Berkshires. Relative to state and national averages, there are larger than average numbers of elderly singles and married couples without children, and smaller numbers of young adults. The 18-24 year range is particularly underrepresented in the Berkshires and Egremont, which can be attributed largely to those who leave to attend college. Refer to the Egremont Master Plan, Population & Demographics Section, for more information.

A high percentage of Egremont residents work in Great Barrington, although a good number commute longer distances. A significant portion of residents operate businesses in town, many within their homes. Industry occupations include trade and services at all levels, artisans,

¹ *Egremont Land Use Plan*, 1976

entrepreneurs, and farmers. Refer to the Egremont Master Plan, Economic Section, for more information.

D. Growth and Development Patterns

The middle range BRPC Regional Economic Model forecast indicates that Egremont's population will grow to 1,420 persons by 2010, and continue to grow in the following decades. The middle population projection for year 2020 is 1,610. This would represent a population increase of over 25%. The Model also projects an increase in households of over 33% between 2000 and 2020. These local projections are largely tied to projected regional growth in population, and do not specifically make adjustments for new seasonal housing. A practical view of Egremont's future population change, taking into consideration local factors, as well as projected regional growth and market factors, indicates that population will likely grow slowly.

Although population declined from 1980 to 1990, the number of housing units and the number of households actually increased. This is due both to a national and regional trend of declining household size, as well as an increase in seasonal houses. In the 1990's, the majority of new homes built were for part-time residency, although there is an apparent trend of second homes being converted to permanent retirement homes.

In the last dozen years, new development has occurred primarily in two forms: 1) 1,700-2,000 square foot single family homes along roadsides quite distant from the villages, with the minimum acreage and frontage allowed under zoning (1-acre lot, 150 ft. frontage width); 2) large expensive homes on lots larger set well back from the road accessed through private drives. The potential for residential growth generated by Egremont's desirability as a retirement location does exist and should be considered when planning for the future.

Many of Egremont's soils present limitations to development, either because they are located on steep slopes, have shallow bedrock, or are unsuitable for septic fields. Soils and water resources are key factors affecting future development of the central and northern parts of town, while steep slopes and sensitive habitat are major considerations in the southern part of town. There are large areas of prime agricultural soils still in agricultural use that the community would like to retain as such. Typically, however, the characteristics that make areas with these soils good for farming also make them most easily developed for residential subdivisions. These factors make much of Egremont's terrain unsuitable or undesirable for development. Egremont is thus faced with difficult decisions regarding how to direct development to more appropriate areas and discourage it in others, while at the same time preserving open space.

In January, 2000 a generalized build-out analysis for Egremont was undertaken, funded by EOEa. It is a static supply-driven planning tool not meant to predict if or when maximum build-out will actually occur. After taking into consideration current land use and absolute and partial development constraints, according to the build-out methodology employed, the town of Egremont has approximately 5,957 acres of potentially developable land, which is 49% of the total area of the town. Conceptually, if this land were developed to the maximum allowed by zoning, it would result in 4,885 new housing units, and the population of Egremont would be about 12,584, about 10 times what it is today. Based on current and historic development trends within the town, it is highly unlikely that this maximum build-out scenario will ever happen.

However, it would not require development anywhere near maximum buildout to have significant impacts on the community and the environment. Local and regional officials, residents, landowners, and agricultural and preservation groups will need to continue to work hard in order to preserve the landscape for the enjoyment of future generations. The protection and management of Egremont's open spaces can continue to evolve to protect wildlife habitat and natural resources, provide recreational activities that respect their natural surroundings, maintain scenic views, and preserve Egremont's rural character.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

A. Geology, Soils and Topography

Egremont is a valley town set between the steep ridges of the Taconic Mountains to the south and west and low hills in Great Barrington and Alford to the east and north. Elevations range from 1893 feet above sea level on Mt. Fray to 684 feet on the Hubbard Brook floodplain along the Sheffield-Egremont Road. Gently rounded Baldwin Hill lies in the center of the mountains, offering views of the peaks and the lower-lying wetlands that surround it. The valley in which Egremont is located covers two distinct subwatersheds that drain the western mountains: the Green River and Karner Brook. The Green River cuts through the northeast corner of Town, and its relatively flat, gravel-rich flood plain fans out at the eastern Town line. Karner Brook falls from the Town of Mt. Washington and forms a flat, marshy flood plain that closes in at Smiley's Pond in the village of South Egremont, eventually flowing into Hubbard Brook. The varied topography of Egremont, from mountains to marshes, adds to its distinctive character.

Bedrock Geology

Egremont is in an ecoregion known as the Western New England Marble Valleys. This ecoregion has a less acidic geology than does the rest of the state, with areas of calcium-rich bedrock.² Three types of metamorphic rock underlie Egremont. These deposits were altered in at least two separate mountain-building episodes. The more weather-resistant rocks remain at high elevations, and the rock more prone to erosion is found primarily in the valley.³ The three types of bedrock found in Egremont are schists, carbonate rock, and quartzitic rock.

Schists predominate in Egremont along the Taconic Range. These are composed of quartz and mica within a green phyllite, the Everett Formation; a black phyllite, the Walloomsac Formation; and Egremont phyllite. These are all rocks which were originally sediments, buried four miles underground. Chemical reactions caused by high temperatures and extreme pressure produced the minerals muscovite and chlorite, which give a glistening sheen to the rock.⁴

Deposits of the carbonate rocks limestone and dolomite dominate much of the landscape in Egremont, and outcrops can be seen east of North Egremont and along the Sheffield border. The presence of limestone throughout much of central Egremont produces "sweet" or alkaline soils, which are favorable for crops and for many species that grow only in calcium-rich environments.⁵

A narrow belt of Cheshire quartzite, a hard metamorphic rock, interbedded with dolostone, extends close to the easternmost border of Egremont, by Vossburg Hill. This formation is structurally similar to that of Tom Ball Mountain and Monument Mountain in Great Barrington. This glacial till is a yellowish-brown, somewhat coarse unconsolidated, unstratified layer of materials, plastered to the bedrock.⁶

² Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Cover letter, 11/24/99.

³ *Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan*, 1988.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

Surficial Geology

When the glaciers advanced upon the Berkshires 20,000 years ago, the ancient landscape, already molded by folding and thrusting of bedrock, took on some significant refinements. The northwest/southwest alignment of the hills shows the path the glacier took as it scraped and eroded the bedrock and deposited a sandy-gravelly layer 0-90 feet thick on the land. As the glacier retreated, other deposits were left behind. Piles of gravel and sand and silt remain where the melting ice dropped them as kames or now-collapsed kettle holes and ice channels.⁷

Near Jug End a streambed of these ancient melt waters consists of five feet of schistose pebbles. North of Harmon Marsh Pond on the Sheffield border the glacier left a terrace of calcareous pebbles 25 feet thick. In the ancient streambed of Karner Brook and Fenton Brook similar ice-contact deposits as well as lake floor deposits and alluvial fan deposits indicate the path of the glacier and that of eroded materials transported by more recent flows.

Other deposits of particular significance to hydrological studies lie along the Green River and then spread from Route 71 to West Plain Road in Great Barrington. This area of a few hundred acres is fairly shallow (15-25 feet) but contains great quantities of gravel, mostly schists, conglomerates and quartz. From the Great Barrington airport south, over Root Pond, across the Hubbard Brook watershed and into Sheffield, there extends an enormous area, five square miles, of glacial outwash. This stratified drift contains clean gravel, well-sorted, indicating the possibility of a tremendous area for recharge for groundwater supplies.⁸

Soils⁹

Generally, most of the soil types in Egremont present some limitations on residential lot development. The western and southwest borders consist almost entirely of steep slopes of 15%-45%. The soils here are very thin and rock outcrops ubiquitous. Many soils on flatter ground are shallow to bedrock or have a hardpan at less than 30 inches. Fully a tenth of the Town has hydric soils, which may be fertile and level, but which are characterized by a seasonably high water table. Rich gravel deposits underlie much of Egremont near streams and swamps, and these deposits add to the difficulties in siting septic systems because of the threat of groundwater contamination.

Soils of the *Taconic Macomber Association*, formed in glacial till derived from phyllite, cover much of the Taconic Range and, in Egremont, the entire western border with New York State and much of the southwestern line. Although the soils have moderate to moderately rapid permeability, the depth to bedrock can be less than 20 inches and there may be outcropping of bedrock as often as every 10 feet, particularly on the steep slopes.

Lanesboro-Dummerston Association soils are fairly deep soils formed in till derived from slate and phyllite. In Egremont they occupy steep slopes (over 15%-45%) along the western and southwestern borders. There is a hardpan in these soils at 30 inches and therefore a perched water table for February and March. The main limitations of these soils for development are slope and slow permeability.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

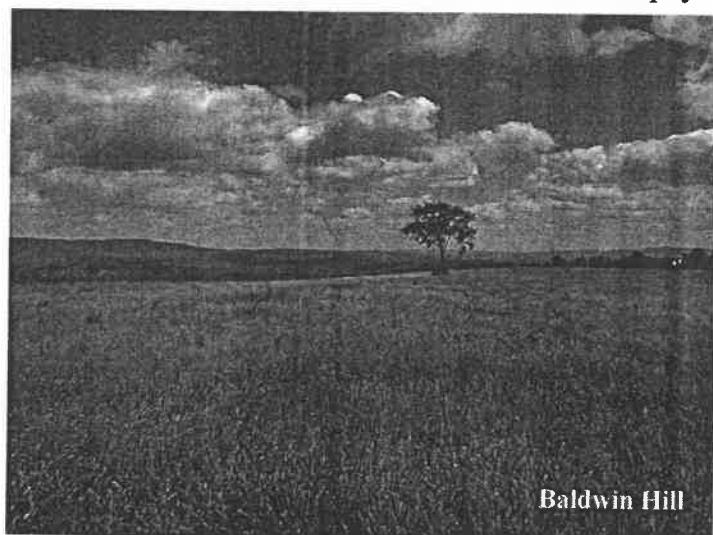
⁹ *Ibid.*

Farmington and *Farmington-Rock Outcrop Complex* soils cover much of Egremont both on gentle and steep slopes. These soils were formed in till derived from limestone and are rapidly permeable. There is, however, bedrock at less than 20 inches. The less steep Farmington Soils are suitable for use as hay and pasture. The northeast corner and the southeast corner of Town are covered extensively with these stony soils and rock outcroppings, as is the area between Mt. Washington Road and Route 23, north of Karner Brook.

Pittsfield Series soils were formed in glacial till derived from limestone and schist. They are stony, crumbly soils and fairly permeable to a hardpan at 30 inches. The less stony, less sloped Pittsfield Loam soils are suitable for cropland and development. There are scattered areas of Pittsfield soils across Baldwin Hill and east to Creamery Road.

In Egremont the wetland or hydric soils include Halsey, Limerick, Kendaia, Lyons, Fredon, and some Saco and Winooski soils. These are all soils associated with a high water table and/or streams and swamps. Some, such as Kendaia and Fredon, are also classified as prime agricultural soils because of their level topography and texture, but require special management such as breaking up the substratum or recontouring for proper drainage. Most of the Hubbard Brook watershed and Karner Brook watershed, as well as the area north and east of Marsh Pond, are covered with hydric soils. In concert with hydrophilic plants, these soils protect groundwater supplies and wildlife habitat and reduce flooding, among other functions.

Some of the soils of Egremont are classified as *prime agricultural soils* because they have the characteristic soil quality, growing season and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops economically. In Egremont these soils include Kendaia, Fredon, Pittsfield loam, Warwick gravelly loam (mapped as Hoosic), Amenia silt loam, Hero fine sandy loam, and small amounts of Copake and Nellis and Stockbridge loams. These soils were all formed in glacial till which was derived from limestone or schist and phyllite. They occupy level to rolling areas in



Town and are thus much less susceptible to erosion than other soils. As a local and regional resource, their value is obvious since these exceptional soils can be farmed continuously with less degradation to the environment. They produce the most food for the least effort and respond well to fertilizer and chemical applications without significant leaching. Typically, these soils also cover those areas of Town most likely to be developed for residential subdivisions. They are level, (mostly) well-drained, free of stones, and

usually free of tree cover—all characteristics that make areas with these soils more easily developed. Prime agricultural soils are found particularly all along the Green River from Alford to the Great Barrington line, most of Baldwin Hill south and east to Creamery Road, some fields

to the west of Route 41 and across the majority of the old Jug End Resort (now part of the Jug End SR-WMA). For information on the location of prime agricultural soils, refer to the map of Agriculture and Open Space, on the previous page.

Areas of excellent drainage are often those areas most important to protect and to shield from development, particularly from contamination of the groundwater. Aquifers in association with ice-contact deposits are located within sand and gravel glacial outwash deposits which allow for excellent and rapid downward movement of water as well as upward movement of water for drinking water supplies.

For soils information relevant to development, see the map of Elevation, Slopes and Erodible Soils, after page 10.

B. Landscape Character

By virtue of its valley location, Egremont is blessed with both breathtaking mountain views and quaint farm landscapes. From numerous points in town one can view the unmistakable jutting profile of Jug End, as well as the Taconic crest, Mount Everett, and other surrounding mountains and foothills. In the valley, the village is characterized by rolling farmland and numerous lakes, ponds, and streams. Protected areas of open space, such as parts of Baldwin Hill, help to maintain the countryside atmosphere for which Egremont is recognized. Forested areas such as Jug End Mountain, extensive agricultural lands including Baldwin Hill, scenic roads, and critical watershed and wetlands habitat resources such as Karner Brook are treasured highly by residents.

See Section IV. F.: Scenic Resources and Unique Environments for descriptions of significant landscape features

C. Water Resources

Surface Water

Karner Brook and the Green River are Egremont's two main flowing bodies of water. Karner Brook flows from the Town of Mt. Washington, draining the Taconics in the southwest. The Brook then flows through a system of wetlands to Smiley's Pond, after which it flows through South Egremont Village and enters Sheffield, flowing into Hubbard Brook.¹⁰ At one time there were many threats to the health of Karner Brook, which is the source of the Town's water supply, including siltation and excess nutrients possibly due to lot development on slopes in the watershed.¹¹ In an attempt to mitigate these threats, 7000 acres of the Karner Brook Watershed, including 5,700 acres in Egremont, were designated a State Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in July 1992. According to the ACEC Program Guide, "The formal designation of an ACEC...directs state environmental agencies to take actions to preserve, restore, and enhance the resources of [the] ACEC."¹² The Karner Brook ACEC contains over twenty state-listed rare species, three varieties of significant natural communities, including calcareous wetlands and acidic rocky summits, and critical fisheries habitat. Karner Brook and its tributary Fenton Brook are classified as a Class A, Outstanding Resource Waters, with flow

¹⁰ *An Assessment of Land Use Activities and Nonpoint Source Pollution in the Housatonic River Watershed*, BRPC, 1999.

¹¹ *Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan*, 1988.

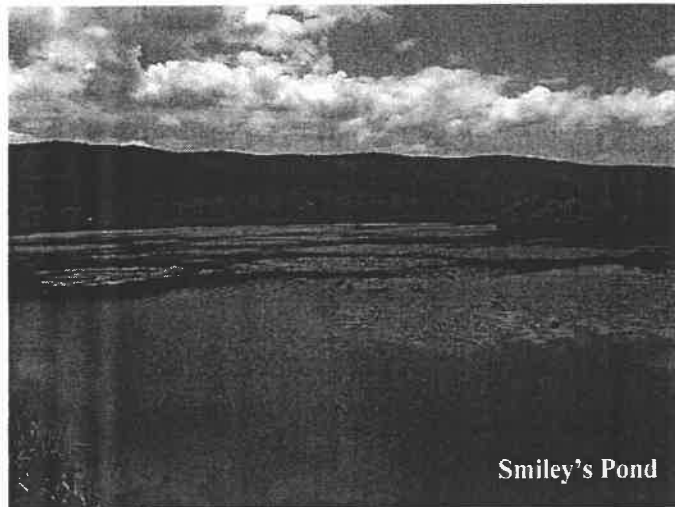
¹² *ACEC Program Guide*, June 1993.

during seasons with normal rainfall at approximately 100,000 gallons a day.¹³ Fenton Brook flows into Karner Brook just north of Mt. Washington Road. Karner Brook is part of the Hubbard Brook watershed, which is in turn part of the Housatonic River Watershed that extends throughout most of the southern portion of Berkshire County.

The other major flowing body of water in Egremont, the Green River, is also a tributary of the Housatonic. The Green River rises in the Taconic Mountains of eastern New York State, passing through Alford and then flowing through the northeast corner of Egremont, passing through North Egremont and Egremont Plain on its way to Seekonk Brook in Great Barrington.¹⁴ There has been strong support for creating a greenway along the River to ensure that it will be buffered from sedimentation.¹⁵ The Green River has been identified as important habitat by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) and is widely used by fishermen.

Egremont has a fair number of small lakes and ponds, many of which are buffered by wetlands. The largest body of open water in Egremont is Prospect Lake, a shallow (14 foot) warm water lake of 55 acres, with fairly extensive private seasonal development on its western shore. The lake abuts Prospect Lake Road, allowing informal public access although it is not developed as such. The Mass. Division of Fisheries has stocked the lake with small mouth bass, yellow perch and bullhead in the past.¹⁶

Other bodies of water in Egremont include Smiley's Pond, Marsh Pond, and Harmon Marsh Pond. Smiley's Pond is a shallow, dammed area of about 20 acres that supports a flourishing muskrat population. The man-made pond is slowly reverting to a natural vegetated state. Despite its proximity to three well-traveled roads (Rt. 23, Mt. Washington Rd., and Rt. 41), this pond provides birdwatchers with many opportunities for waterfowl sightings.¹⁷ Marsh Pond, the largest natural pond within the Karner Brook watershed, originally covered 70 acres, but is now approximately 40 acres.¹⁸ It is an important groundwater recharge area. Harmon Marsh Pond is a private pond of 8 acres, half of which are in Sheffield.¹⁹



¹³ *The Karner Brook Watershed: A Proposal for Nomination as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991

¹⁴ *Assessment of Land use Activities and Nonpoint Source Pollution in the Housatonic River Watershed*, BRPC, 1999.

¹⁵ *Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan*, 1988.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *The Karner Brook Watershed: A Proposal for Nomination as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991.

¹⁹ *Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan*, 1988.

The map of Environmental Features and Constraints on the next page depicts major bodies of water as well as the 100- and 200-foot buffer zones surrounding perennial streams.

Flood Hazard Areas

100-year floodplain areas are regulated under the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act. Both Karner Brook and the Green River have significant areas of 100-year floodplain associated with them, as does Marsh Pond. Near Karner Brook, floodplain areas stretch along Mount Washington Rd., near Jug End Fen and surrounding Smiley's Pond. The 100-year floodplain of the Green River extends hundreds of feet wide along its length, near North Egremont Village and Egremont Plain. Marsh Pond also has a floodplain that extends outside the boundaries of its associated wetlands. The map of Environmental Features and Constraints on the next page shows the areas of 100-year floodplain in Egremont.

Wetlands

Wetlands in Egremont extend north and west of Marsh Pond, and include much of the lower Fenton and Karner Brooks watersheds and all along Hubbard Brook. These wetlands experience seasonal flooding and high water tables most of the year. Their soils and the hydrophilic vegetation act as sponges to absorb floodwaters and to release these waters slowly, thereby decreasing chances for downstream peak flows.²⁰ The part of the Karner Brook ACEC that lies in Egremont contains approximately 700 acres of wetlands.²¹

Jug End Fen, a peaty calcareous fen in the Mount Washington Road Valley, is an example of an extremely rare type of natural community in Massachusetts. At least 30 state-listed species of plants and animals are found in calcareous fens. The survival of this area is dependent on the health of Karner Brook. Jug End Fen is surrounded by protected land owned by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) and the Nature Conservancy. Townhouse Hill Fen is a calcareous fen located on the southern slopes of Baldwin Hill that is protected by land owned by the Egremont Land Trust.²²

The map of Environmental Features and Constraints on the next page shows the wetlands areas and the 100-ft wetlands buffer zones.

Aquifer Recharge Areas

Because of Egremont's varied geological conditions, groundwater is found in widely differing conditions, depths and quantities. The schistose bedrock along the western and southern borders generally does not yield large quantities of water to wells, averaging 5 gallons per minute. The limestone and dolostone bedrock of much of the northern section of Town and the quartzite rock of the eastern part may produce excellent yields to wells depending upon the size and frequency of faults and fractures within those rocks. Some wells in the bedrock aquifer have produced up to 300 gal/min., although the median is usually 9 gal/min. Further, the surficial deposits in Egremont may provide significant groundwater yields. The Karner Brook watershed to Smiley's Pond and the entire Hubbard Brook watershed might produce up to 40 gal/min. The probability of such high yields depends on the actual extent of the underlying carbonate bedrock with its

²⁰ *Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan*, 1988.

²¹ *The Karner Brook Watershed: A Proposal for Nomination as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991.

²² *Ibid.*

high solution porosity and on the capacity of the surficial deposits to allow surface waters to filter down to the bedrock with ease. Large deposits of coarse gravel within the glacial outwash of silt, sand, and gravel will naturally yield greater quantities to drilled wells. Areas of recharge where the bedrock aquifer receives replenishing surface waters tend to be gravel deposits at the base of hills, particularly the Karner Brook watershed, below the north east slopes of Baldwin Hill, and directly west of Vossburg Hill. In addition, all wetland areas at the base of slopes serve as recharge areas to underground aquifers, large and small.²³

Because of the proximity of groundwater to the surface of the land, septic systems can be difficult to site and maintain. Many wells in the more densely developed areas of Egremont have become contaminated due to untreated water entering groundwater supplies.

D. Vegetation²⁴

(See *Appendix B: Partial List of Plants in the Karner Brook Watershed*)

With a diversity of upland, wetland, and old field habitats, Egremont supports numerous types of vegetation. Within the Karner Brook watershed alone there are 41 species of trees, 20 species of shrubs, 63 herbaceous species, 9 species of ferns, and 28 species of clubmosses and horsetails. Twenty-four of these plant species are listed as Endangered, Threatened, or of Special Concern by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.²⁵

The Land Use Map on the next page shows forested land and wetlands in Egremont.

Upland Vegetation

In 1997, roughly 59% of the land in Egremont was forested. Much of this forest is found in the steep upland areas that are difficult to clear for agriculture or development. Forest types in Egremont include mesic northern hardwoods, rich mesic forest, and rock outcrop communities.

A transitional hardwood forest community characterizes the upper slopes of Egremont. Common tree species include sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), black oak (*Quercus nigra*), and white pine (*Pinus strobus*). White ash (*Fraxinus americana*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), and American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) are less common than in the northern hardwood forest found farther north. Cool, moist, shady hollows may have stands of eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), with spinulose wood fern (*Dryopteris spinulosa*), Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), long beech fern (*Thelypteris phegopteris*), and polypody fern (*Polypodium vulgare*) growing underneath. Thickets of mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) grow in some areas, blooming with pink-and-white flower clusters in early summer. The understory may also contain hobblebush (*Viburnum alnifolium*) and striped maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*).^{26,27,28}

²³ Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan, 1988.

²⁴ Scientific names of plants researched on Gardenweb's plant database, <http://plants.gardenweb.com/plants/>.

²⁵ *The Karner Brook Watershed: A Proposal for Nomination as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991.

²⁶ Laubach, Rene, *A Guide to Natural Places in the Berkshire Hills*, Stockbridge MA, 1997.

²⁷ Weatherbee, Pamela and Garrett Crow, "Natural Plant Communities of Berkshire County, Massachusetts," *Rhodora*, Vol. 94, pp. 171-209, 1992.

²⁸ Conversation with Frank Lowenstein, Berkshires Office of the Nature Conservancy, 2/1/2000.

One significant forest community found in Egremont is rich mesic forest, with moderately moist, nutrient-rich soils. This community has a tall, full tree canopy and a sparse subcanopy and shrub layer, as well as an unusually diverse community of herbs and spring ephemerals that can include more than 100 different species. Sugar maple dominates this community, with white ash, basswood (*Tilia americana*), bitternut hickory (*Carya cordiformis*), black birch (*Betula lenta*), yellow birch, red oak, and American beech also common. Hop-hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), musclewood (*Carpinus caroliniana*), nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*) are smaller trees commonly found in rich mesic forest. The herbaceous layer of rich mesic forest is made up of large numbers of ferns, sedges, lilies, and buttercups, which thrive on the thick layer of litter that builds up on the forest floor. Spring ephemerals, which flower in early spring before the canopy shades the forest floor, include wild leek (*Allium tricoccum*), toothwort (*Dentaria diphylla*), Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), trout lily (*Erythronium americanum*), and spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*). Other typical herbaceous species include blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), round-leaved hepatica (*Hepatica nobilis* var. *obtusata*), wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), large-flowered bellwort (*Uvularia grandifolia*), red trillium (*Trillium erectum*), waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum virginianum*), ebony spleenwort (*Asplenium platyneuron*) and bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*). Ferns include maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*), Goldie's fern (*Dryopteris goldiana*), and glade fern (*Diplazium pycnocarpon*).^{29,30,31}

Acidic rock outcrop communities are found on Jug End Mountain, where harsh conditions and lack of soil prevent the growth of trees. Low shrubs dominate these areas, with grasses, sedges, and a few herbaceous species forming a secondary component. Rock outcrop communities include plants usually found only in open areas, as well as species common to the surrounding forest. Characteristic shrubs and herbaceous species include little bluestem grass (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), poverty grass (*Danthonia spicata*), Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pennsylvanica*), rock harlequin (*Corydalis sempervirens*), scrub oak (*Quercus ilicifolia*), and blueberries (*Vaccinium pallidum* and *V. angustifolium*). Trees include pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*) and oaks (*Quercus* spp.).³²



Where old fields have fallen into disuse and returned to forest, white pines (*Pinus strobus*), birches (*Betula* spp.) and occasionally Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) take over as second-growth woodland. In many areas in Egremont where poor soils with hardpans or ledge have contributed to the end of cropping certain fields, extensive forests of white pines with understories of partridgeberry, viburnum (*Viburnum* spp.), wintergreen (*Galuthra procumbens*),

²⁹ Weatherbee, Pamela and Garrett Crow, "Natural Plant Communities of Berkshire County, Massachusetts," *Rhodora*, Vol. 94, pp. 171-209, 1992.

³⁰ Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, *Natural Community Fact Sheets*, "Rich Mesic Forest," 1997.

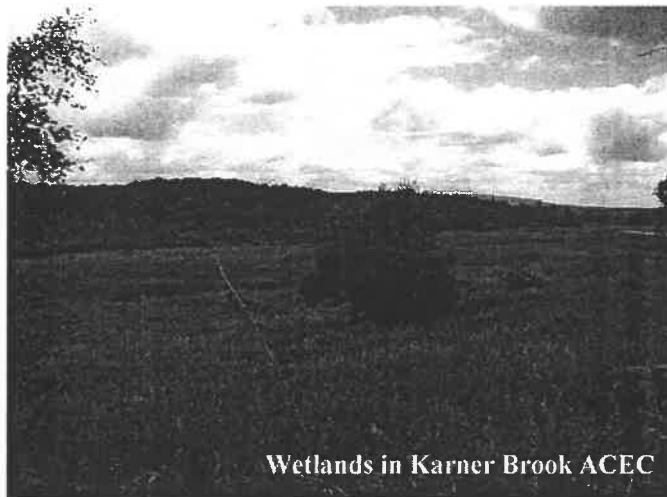
³¹ Conversation w/ Frank Lowenstein, Berkshires Office of the Nature Conservancy, 1/31/2000.

³² Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, *Natural Community Fact Sheets*, "Rocky Summit/Rock Outcrop Communities," 1999.

and clubmosses have developed.³³ However, often the understory is made up of invasive exotic species, such as Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), shrubby honeysuckles (*Lonicera* spp.), and Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus obiculatus*). Abandoned farmland has gradually filled with species like thistles, blueberries, ragweed, goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.), and spirea. Sumacs and dogwoods as well as asters and bedstraws establish themselves as the fields undergo succession.³⁴

Wetland Vegetation

One of the most unique plant communities in Massachusetts is the calcareous fen, exemplified in Egremont as Jug End Fen in the Mount Washington Road valley, and Townhouse Hill Fen on Baldwin Hill. Calcareous fens are open, peaty wetlands with cold, alkaline groundwater that seeps or flows from a calcareous (calcium-rich) mineral substrate. Sedges, grasses, broadleaved herbs, and shrubs dominate these wetlands. Common species include American sedge (*Carex lasiocarpa*), white beak-rush (*Rhynchospora alba*), porcupine sedge (*Carex hystricina*), yellow sedge (*Carex flava*), Grass-of-Parnassus (*Parnassia glauca*), common horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), fen cotton-grass (*Eriophorum viridi-carinatum*), and autumn, hoary, and silky willow (*Salix serissima*, *S. candida*, *S. sericea*).³⁵



Significant portions of the wetlands in the Jug End Reservation are wet meadows, which have been maintained through human intervention (cutting trees). Vegetation in these areas is characterized by a rich variety of sedges and forbs. Woody shrubs such as willows, dogwoods (*Cornus* spp.), and *Spiraeas* are also often present.³⁶

Prospect Lake houses a community of water plants that grow in a moderately alkaline environment, including *Potamogeton* spp., *Ceratophyllum demersum*, *Najas flexilis*, *Elodea canadensis*, and others. With a pH above 9.0, Smiley's Pond is even more alkaline, supporting a variety of uncommon species adapted to these conditions.³⁷

Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species

(See *Appendix A: State-Listed Species Recorded in Egremont*)

At least 57 state listed rare species of plants and animals occur in calcareous wetlands (30 of these occur in calcareous fens), making them one of the most important natural communities in

³³ *Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan*, 1988.

³⁴ *Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan*, 1988.

³⁵ Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, *Natural Community Fact Sheets*, "Calcareous Fens," 1990.

³⁶ *Final Management Plan, Jug End State Reservation and Wildlife Management Area*, DEM, 1996.

³⁷ Weatherbee, Pamela and Garrett Crow, "Natural Plant Communities of Berkshire County, Massachusetts," *Rhodora*, Vol 94, No. 878, 1992, pp. 171-193.

Massachusetts. The most severe threat to these areas is alteration in the quantity or quality of the groundwater that feeds them, alterations that are often the result of development in sensitive areas. Calcareous areas in Egremont and Sheffield depend on the quality of the water that comes from calcareous bedrock and glacial till in Mount Washington and nearer areas of glacial outwash.³⁸ The calcareous areas in Egremont are at least partially protected by the Karner Brook ACEC.

Rich mesic forest communities are home to at least eleven species of rare plants, most of which are herbaceous species and/or spring ephemerals. Threats to this community include fragmentation and isolation due to logging or development. Rich mesic forest is especially vulnerable to logging because opening up the canopy often allows invasive species to take hold and crowd out fragile herbaceous species. Soil disturbance can disrupt the nutrient and water availability requirements of rich mesic plants. The community is scarce outside of the calcareous bedrock areas of the Berkshires.³⁹

The Green River is a site rich with rare species unique to the southern Berkshires, including rare trees and forbs found in floodplains.^{40,41}

For information on significant habitat areas, refer to the map of Habitat and Open Space, after page 19.

E. Fisheries and Wildlife

Upland Species

(See *Appendix C: Mammals of Berkshire County* and *Appendix D: Birds of Berkshire County*)

The mountainous, forested areas in Egremont provide ideal habitat for many large mammals, including black bear, bobcat, deer, fisher, coyote, and beaver. Other inhabitants of the forest landscape include small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, game birds, songbirds, and migratory birds. South-facing acid summit/rock outcrop communities provide good habitat for snakes and cliff-dwelling species. The rocky areas of Jug End are also home to bat hibernaculae that house five species of bats.

Egremont's forests are home to many species of woodland birds. Wild turkeys and ruffed grouse are two of the larger birds that live on the ground in the woods and woodland edges. Other ground-dwellers include the dark-eyed junco, veery, wood and hermit thrushes, white-throated sparrow, and ovenbird. Oaks, beeches, maples, and birches provide nest sites for birds such as rose-breasted grosbeak, scarlet tanager, American robin, red-eyed vireo, least flycatcher, bluejay, brown creeper, and many species of wood warblers. Birds that prefer to nest in hollows and cavities in the trunks of trees include downy, hairy, and pileated woodpeckers, yellow-bellied

³⁸ Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, *Natural Community Fact Sheets*, "Calcareous Fens," 1990.

³⁹ Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, *Natural Community Fact Sheets*, "Rich Mesic Forests," 1997.

⁴⁰ Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, cover letter, 11/29/99.

⁴¹ Conversation w/ Frank Lowenstein, Berkshires Office of the Nature Conservancy, 1/31/2000.

sap-sucker, northern flicker, tufted titmouse, black-capped chickadee, and red-breasted and white-breasted nuthatches.

Many birds and small mammals prefer edge habitats and meadows, which Egremont has in abundance due to its agricultural history. The grasshopper sparrow, a species of Special Concern, is one example of a bird that requires this type of environment, patchy grassland with bare ground and bunch grasses such as poverty grass, bluestem, and fescue.⁴² Keeping old fields open through mowing may encourage these species.

Wetland Species

(See *Appendix E: Amphibians and Reptiles of the Karner Brook Watershed* and *Appendix F: Fish Species of the Karner Brook Watershed*)

Wetlands in Egremont support a variety of amphibians and reptiles, waterfowl, and water-loving mammals such as beaver, muskrat, otter and raccoon.⁴³ Two salamanders and two turtles within the Karner Brook ACEC are designated of Special Concern by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.⁴⁴ Both Karner Brook and the Green River provide habitat for wild trout, and the Green River is also home to the longnose sucker, a State species of special concern.⁴⁵ The Green River is stocked annually by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife with native brook trout as well as introduced rainbow and brown trout.

A Guide to Natural Places in the Berkshire Hills describes Smiley's Pond as one of the best places in the Berkshires to view waterfowl and other birds. It is one of very few places in the Berkshires to view common moorhens, cootlike birds that nest there in May. Other waterfowl that frequent the pond include Canada goose, black duck, mallards, green-winged and blue-winged teals, wood ducks, belted kingfisher, black terns, and great blue heron. Birds that prefer wet habitats visit here as well and include yellow warbler, common yellowthroat, red-winged blackbird, common grackle, and swamp sparrow.⁴⁶

Muskrat and beaver also dwell in Smiley's Pond and the upstream wetlands, as do turtles. The pond is habitat for frogs and toads, including spring peepers, bullfrogs, green frogs, and American toads.

Rare and Endangered Species

(See *Appendix A: State-Listed Species Recorded in Egremont*)

The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) has identified several areas in Egremont as habitat for state-listed wildlife. The Karner Brook stream corridor and the Jug End Fen area, along with Marsh Pond, provide important habitat for plant and amphibian species. Other designated areas include wetlands in French Park near the intersection of Rt. 71 Prospect

⁴² Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, *Natural Community Fact Sheets*, "Grasshopper Sparrow," 1986.

⁴³ *Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan*, 1988.

⁴⁴ *The Karner Brook Watershed: A Proposal for Nomination as An Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991.

⁴⁵ *Water Resources of the Housatonic River Basin: Water Use and Hydrology*, DEM, 1999.

⁴⁶ Laubach, Rene. *A Guide to Natural Places in the Berkshire Hills*, Stockbridge, 1997.

Lake Rd., an area near the northeastern part of Boice Rd., and a tributary stream of Fenton Brook.⁴⁷ Two state-listed waterfowl may make their home in Egremont's marshes and ponds. Cold water streams, springs, and lakes provide habitat for state-listed salamanders and turtles.

Ridgetop pitch pine/scrub oak and rock outcrop communities such as found in Jug End are important habitat for upland species. These areas provide habitat for rare plants and reptiles and (historically) the endangered Indiana Bat, which has not been seen in Massachusetts since 1939.

For information on significant habitat areas, refer to the map of Habitat and Open Space, on the previous page.

F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

The Karner Brook Watershed was designated a State Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in 1992 because of the unique scenic, environmental, and cultural resources it contains. The Karner Brook ACEC is home to over twenty state-listed rare species, three varieties of significant natural communities, including calcareous wetlands and acidic rocky summits, and critical fisheries habitat. It also contains some of the most scenic landscapes in Massachusetts, with a wide diversity of wooded mountains, rolling hills, open fields, streams, ponds, and wetlands.

For more detailed information on significant habitat areas in Egremont, see the subregional map of Habitat and Open Space, on the previous page.

Jug End State Reservation and Wildlife Management Area

Within the Karner Brook ACEC lies the Jug End State Reservation and Wildlife Management Area (SR-WMA). The Jug End SR-WMA was created on the site of the former Jug End Resort in 1993, with the purpose of conserving its natural and historic resources and protecting the water quality of Fenton Brook. The State intends the property to be used for passive recreation, scientific research and environmental education, and historic preservation of buildings on the site.⁴⁸ The *Massachusetts Landscape Inventory* designates this area as "Noteworthy" for its scenic qualities.⁴⁹

Farmland and Baldwin Hill

Agriculture has long been part of Egremont's identity as a town, and continues to add to its scenery and economy. The center of the Egremont map is also the agricultural center of town, with the extensive farms that blanket Baldwin Hill. Clusters of farmed land also exist to the north and south of the villages, along Rt 41, Rt. 71 and Boice Rd, and south of Mt. Washington Rd. near Jug End. Farmland along Rt. 41 in South Egremont, some of it protected by conservation restrictions, forms an agriculturally productive and scenic entry into South Egremont.

⁴⁷ *Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas*, 1997-98.

⁴⁸ *Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, Final Management Plan for Jug End SR-WMA*, 1996..

⁴⁹ *The Massachusetts Landscape Inventory*, DEM, 1982.

The Baldwin Hill area includes highly productive agricultural land on both sides of Baldwin Hill Road, from North Egremont Village to South Egremont Village. This area is still home to several working farms. The scenic vistas of and from the top of Baldwin Hill are some of the most distinctive landscapes in Massachusetts, and are identified as such in *The Massachusetts Landscape Inventory*.

Townhouse Hill Fen, a calcareous wetland, nestles among the farm fields on Baldwin Hill.

Streams, Lakes and Wetlands

Set within the mountains and surrounded by woods or farms, Egremont's lakes, streams, and wetlands add to the scenic beauty of the area. The Green River corridor is designated as "Noteworthy" in the *Massachusetts Landscape Inventory*.⁵⁰ Ponds and lakes such as Smiley's Pond and Prospect Lake are treasured for the opportunities they provide to view migrating waterfowl. The town's wetlands support a variety of colorful flora and fauna.

Scenic Resources

Opportunities for viewing the scenic areas in Egremont can be found along most of the roads that wind through this community. In order to assess the relative quality of these scenic roads, BRPC adapted a method used by the Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway Study, which was based on a study by Frederic O. Sargent of the Vermont Resources Research Center. For a complete description of the assessment methods, please see Appendix G: Inventory System for Roads with Scenic Features. The results of the assessment can be found in Table NR1 Inventory of Roads with Scenic Features, p. 22.

A significant number of roads in Egremont were rated Very High, with exceptional views and a high variety of natural and cultural features. Nearly all of the roads on Baldwin Hill received a rating of Very High or High. Other areas with a high number of scenic roads are the northern end of Town, including parts of Rt. 71, Shun Toll Rd., Rowe Rd., and Millard Rd. and the southeastern area, including Sheffield Rd. and parts of Rt. 41.

There are scenic road areas throughout the town. Specific ones inventoried are shown on the Inventory on the following page and on Map __ Scenic Resources. All roadways serve recreational purposes as well as transportation use, to varying degrees. For all roadways, especially non-numbered routes, it is important that all uses of roads, including recreational, be considered in maintenance and planning. Local residents should be notified and allowed to have input before any changes in road width or surfacing occur. It is recommended that a Roads Commission be formed to assist the Road Superintendent in planning and addressing the multiple uses of the towns roadways.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

Table NR1 Inventory of Roads with Scenic Features

Road	Map Ref. #	Variety	Field of View	Depth of View	Diminishing Factors	Prelim. Overall Rating	Overall Rating	Characteristics
Rt. 41	9	H (8)	H	H	L (0)	V. High		Historic farmstead (1744), agricultural pattern, field & forest edge, historic houses, view of Jug End Mtn & range, pond, fall foliage
Townhouse Hill Rd., East	15	H (9)	M	H	L (0)	V. High		Tree-lined rd, farm buildings, stone fence, field & forest edge, view of Mt. Everett, mountain range to the east, foliage
Jug End Rd.	53	H (10)	M	M	L (0)	V. High		View of Jug End + mountains, field + forest edge, agricultural pattern, fall foliage, Jug End Fen, leaf tunnel effect, stone walls, rail fence, historic structures
Baldwin Hill N-S: middle	16	H (9)	H	H	M (2)	V. High		Country road feel, stone wall, 360 mountain views, fields, field & forest edge, fences, farm buildings, intrusive development, radio tower
Baldwin Hill E-W: East	19	H (7)	H	H	L (0)	V. High		Field, field & forest edge, Mt. Everett, 360 degree view, barns, stone wall, foliage, historic houses
Rt. 71 West to Alford border	27	H (9)	M	M	L (0)	V. High		Farm fields, field & forest edge, mountain views, barn, fence row, stone walls, fall foliage
Townhouse Hill Rd., West	14	H (8)	H	M	M (1)	V. High		Farm fields, cemetery, mountain views, taconic range, foliage, field & forest edge, stone wall, Townhouse Hill Fen.
Jug End Rd., S. of Mt. 5 Washington Rd.	5	M (6)	H	H	L (0)	V. High		Great views of Jug End, mountain range to the north, fields & farmland, foliage.
Guilder Hollow Rd.	7	H (7)	M	H	L (0)	V. High		Row of sugar maples, country road feel, farm fields, mountain views, fall foliage, field & forest edge, fence
Rt. 41, north of Sheffield border	8	M (6)	H	H	L (0)	V. High		Tree-lined, stone walls, mountain view, farms, historic house, fall foliage
Baldwin Hills E-W: West	20	H (7)	H	H	M (1)	V. High		Forest & field edge, agricultural pattern, 360 degree view, leaf tunnel effect, foliage, country road feel
Shun Toll Rd.	26	H (9)	M	L	L (0)	V. High		Field & forest, stone wall, tree canopy, mix of tree species, country road feel, hills, boulders, old barn, rail fence
Boice Rd., north	30	H (7)	M	H	L (0)	V. High		Fields, farmhouse, wetland, significant mountain views, Mt. Everett, field & forest edge

Road	Map Ref. #	Variety ^a	Field of View ^b	Depth of View ^c	Diminishing Factors ^d	Prelim. Overall Rating	Overall Rating	Characteristics
Baldwin Hill N-S: north	18	M (6)	H	H	M (1)	V. High		Fields, picturesque barn, forest edge, 360 mountain view, fall foliage
Rowe Rd	28	H (8)	M	L	L (0)	V. High		Rail fence, river, field & forest edge, tree canopy, fall foliage, boulders, barn, mountain views
Sheffield Rd.	33	H (7)	M	M	L (0)	V. High		1,780 Inn, tree-lined, village houses close to road, mountain views, field & forest edge, llama farm
Millard Rd.	45	H (8)	M	M	L (1)	V. High		Field + forest edge, tree-lined rd., country road feel, stream, historic houses, marsh, fall foliage, mountain view, tornado damage
Baldwin Hill N-S: southern end	13	M (6)	M	M	L (0)	High		Townhouse Hill Fen, tree-lined w/ willows, no utilities, field, old barn, foliage, mountains
Mill Rd.	25	H (7)	M	L	L (0)	High		Water, rail fence, stone wall, field & forest edge, leaf tunnel effect, fall foliage, farm buildings
Mt Washington Road, 4 between Rt. 23 & Jug End Rd.		M (5)	H	M	M (1)	High		View of Mt. Darby, Jug End, fall foliage, field & forest edge, tower visible.
Phillips Road	17	M (5)	M	M	L (0)	High		Field & forest, mountains, cemetery, foliage, agricultural pattern
Creamery Rd. - north section	32	M (5)	M	H	M (1)	High		Mountains, old barn, fields, field & forest edge, fall foliage
Blunt Rd. - N.	41	M (6)	M	L	L (0)	High		Agricultural pattern, field + forest edge, marsh, wooded edge, leaf tunnel effect, country road feel
Mt. Washington Rd., from Jug 2 End Rd.		M (5)	M	M	M (1)	High		Some views of mountains, wooded, fall foliage, field & forest edge, utility poles.
Jug End Rd. to Mt. 3 Washington Rd.		M (5)	H	M	M (2)	High		Views of Jug End, field & forest edge, fall foliage, utility poles, view of tower
Jug End Rd. south of the 6 Avenue		M (6)	L	L	L (0)	High		Pond, historic house, stone walls, country road feel, leaf tunnel effect, foliage
Baldwin Hill N-S: North	23	M (5)	L	M	L (0)	High		Country road feel, leaf tunnel effect, fall foliage, mountain views, stone walls
Blunt Rd. - N.	42	M (4)	M	M	L (0)	High		Horse corrals, mountain views, fall foliage, tree lined road
Warner Rd.	54	M (5)	L	M	L (0)	High		Mountain view, pine trees, fall foliage, country rd. feel, pond.

^a H = High variety, 7+ features; M = Medium variety, 4-6 features; L = Low variety, 0-3 features. Number in parentheses denotes number of features counted. See Appendix G for a full list of features.

^b H = High, view mostly unobstructed; M = Medium, view partially obstructed; L = Low, view mostly obstructed.

^c H = High, long-distance view; M = Medium, mid-range view; L = Low, view mostly obstructed.

^d H = High, 3+ diminishing factors; M = Medium, 1-2 factors; L = Low, 0 factors. See Appendix G for a full list of factors.

F. Environmental Problems

Water Quality Issues

Prospect Lake suffers from excessive weed growth and appears on the State list of impaired waters. According to a 1991 DEP Diagnostic/Feasibility study of the lake, problems include nutrient loading from agriculture and noxious weed growth. In the past, there has been speculation about septic systems serving homes along the lake that were originally built as summer cottages. Road run-off may also be contributing to the problem. Reports from residents living on the lake seem to indicate that the problem has not been fully resolved.

In recent years, wells in various parts of town have been found to be contaminated. One cause of this problem is failed septic systems that leach untreated waste into groundwater. Egremont is particularly susceptible to this problem due to a high water table and soil types that do not often "perk" well.

A windshield survey performed as part of a 1999 nonpoint source pollution assessment of the Housatonic River watershed found two sites along Egremont's dirt roads that showed evidence of erosion. The two sites identified were in the Millard Road subdivision and a parking area on Boice Rd.⁵¹ Stormwater problems may be present on other town roads as well.

Karner Brook is a critical water resource both because it provides the town water supply and because it is habitat for rare species. At times, these two characteristics of the stream have come into conflict, with the construction of a new water filtration plant in South Egremont. Construction of the plant may have created a siltation threat to Jefferson Salamander habitat along Karner Brook.⁵²

Development on Steep Slopes

Recent technological advances have made it easier to place buildings on steep slopes that would have been undevelopable before. In the last few years, the Town has seen many of these homes built in prominent places such as the ridge west of Prospect Lake. A subdivision with almost 25% slopes was carved out of the south side of Egremont before the creation of the Jug End SR-WMA, and now has two homes built on it. Hilltop development like this has environmental as well as scenic impacts. Steeper areas often have thin soils and rocky outcrops that make them more sensitive to the impacts of construction and development and more prone to erosion. The roads leading up to these structures may increase runoff on these fragile soils and contribute to erosion as well.

For the location of erodible woodland soils and steep slopes, see the map of Elevation, Slopes, and Erodible Soils, after p. 12.

Invasive Species

Invasive plants are species (usually non-native) that outcompete native species for habitat. Many invasives were originally planted as ornamentals or in hedgerows, and now thrive in forest, old field, and wetland habitats. Species that invade the understory of forests, choking out spring

⁵¹ *Assessment of Land Use Activities and Nonpoint Source Pollution in the Housatonic River Watershed*, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, 1999.

⁵² Conversation with Frank Lowenstein, Berkshires Office of the Nature Conservancy, 1/31/2000.

ephemerals and tree seedlings include Japanese barberry, Oriental bittersweet, and non-native honeysuckles. Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) is an herbaceous species that often invades the forest from roadside edges. Wetland invasives include purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), still planted ornamentally, and common reed (*Phragmites australis*). Methods to control the spread of these species vary, usually involving multiple cuttings and occasionally selective application of herbicide, but some (including purple loosestrife) are almost impossible to eradicate once they are established. Many of these species spread fastest in areas where disturbance has occurred, such as roadsides, abandoned fields, right-of-way corridors, and ditches.⁵³

Forest Diseases and Insect Threats

Beech bark disease is a widespread killer of American beech in the Northeast. The disease is caused by a fungus, *Nectria ditissima*, spread by the beech scale insect, *Cryptococcus fagisuga*. The fungus invades the bark, girdling the trees and causing significant mortality and timber defect. Outbreaks may be controlled by environmental factors, such as low temperatures, and predators such as the ladybird beetle. Insecticides are sometimes used on ornamental trees to prevent infestation with the scale insect, but disease in forest stands cannot be controlled at a reasonable cost.⁵⁴

The hemlock wooly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) is an insect that infests hemlock trees in the Northeast. Although the USDA Forest Service distribution map of infested counties indicates that the adelgid had not been reported in Berkshire County in 1999, it is present in the Connecticut and New York State counties adjacent to the south end of the County, and may pose a threat in the future.⁵⁵ The adelgid, believed to be introduced from Asia, sucks sap from young twigs, reducing or preventing new tree growth. Defoliation and tree death can occur within several years.⁵⁶ The Forest Service is currently exploring control through the introduction of natural insect predators.⁵⁷

⁵³ Weatherbee, Pamela, Paul Somers, and Tim Simmons. *A Guide to Invasive Plants in Massachusetts*, Mass. Department of Fisheries & Wildlife, 1998.

⁵⁴ USDA Forest Service, *Forest Insect & Disease Leaflet 75*, "Beech Bark Disease", willow.ncfes.umn.edu/fidl-beech/fidl-beech.htm.

⁵⁵ USDA Forest Service, "Hemlock Wooly Adelgid Distribution – 1999", www.fs.fed.us/na/morgantown/fhp/hwa/hwa99.gif

⁵⁶ USDA Forest Service, *Pest Alert*, "Hemlock Wooly Adelgid," www.fs.fed.us/na/morgantown/fhp/palerts/hemlock/hemlock.htm.

⁵⁷ McClure, Mark, Scott Salom, and Kathleen Shields, USDA Forest Service, *FHTET 96-35*, "Hemlock Wooly Adelgid," 1996.

V. INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTEREST

Description of Protected and Unprotected Parcels

Open space in Egremont falls into several categories of ownership and protection status. State and Federal lands owned and managed by the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Environmental Law Enforcement (DFWELE), or National Park Service are considered permanently protected. Non-profit conservation organizations such as the Nature Conservancy and the Egremont Land Trust have worked to protect land by purchasing it as a preserve and/or holding and monitoring deed restrictions on private properties. Some of these deed restrictions are only temporary, or only govern specific qualities of the property, such as particular scenic view. The Town of Egremont owns several properties, including the extensive French Park; however, these are not all permanently protected. Many properties in Egremont are enrolled in the Chapter 61, 61A, or 61B programs, which discourage owners from changing the use of the parcel but do not technically protect it. Although Egremont has an extensive inventory of protected open space, many important places that protect wildlife habitat and water resources and provide scenic views, recreation, and other benefits are not legally protected.

The location and ownership status of open space in Egremont is shown on the Map of Open Space on the next page. Detailed information about each parcel is shown in Table OS1: Inventory of Open Space Parcels, p. 30. Also see the maps of Agriculture and Open Space, and Habitat and Open Space, Section IV.

A. Private Parcels

Lands With Permanent Protection

Individuals with deed restrictions on their land—either conservation restrictions or Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APRs)—own all of the permanently protected private properties in Egremont. Together, the lands protected in this fashion make up 587 acres of Egremont's open space.

Recently, the Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC) helped place a farm property on Baldwin Hill into the state APR program. Turner Farms, Inc now own the 203.8-acre property, which will remain available for agricultural use in perpetuity. One house was built on the property before the APR was sold, but the rest of the parcel will remain undivided.

The Berle Farm, located north of North Egremont Village on Boice Rd., is an 87-acre sheep farm protected via the State's APR program.

A property important to Egremont for both scenic and historical reasons lies south of South Egremont Village, on either side of Route 41. The Westover-Bacon-Potts House on this property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. All of the buildings, including the house, woodshed, horse barn, cow barn, and carriage barn are protected by Preservation Restrictions. In

addition, the 88.05 parcel is protected by an APR and a Conservation Restriction between the owner and the Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC).⁵⁸

ATC holds several other conservation restrictions on privately-owned properties located within the Appalachian Trail Conservation Viewshed, along the old Appalachian Trail corridor (the trail has since been moved north). Together these parcels make up over 200 acres.

Lands with Partial Protection

A total of 23 properties in Egremont are enrolled in either the Chapter 61 or Chapter 61A program. The program eases the tax burden of land ownership for forest and agricultural uses, respectively, and also imposes penalties if the use of the land changes within a time period of 10 years. While it provides an incentive for keeping land in open space, Chapter status is not considered fully protective, as the gain from selling the land often outweighs the tax penalty incurred. However, Chapter lands in Egremont make up almost 900 acres, and are therefore a significant portion of the Town's open space inventory.

One privately-owned, 3.88 acre parcel along Rt. 41 and the Appalachian Trail Corridor is protected by a scenic easement. Some development might be possible on the property under the terms of the deed restriction.

Unprotected Private Lands Important to the Town

A large parcel of unprotected forestland lies to the northwest of the Jug End SR-WMA. With its proximity to Karner Brook and the Jug End SR-WMA, its steep slopes and forest cover, this parcel is a good candidate for conservation. TNC has expressed interest in acquiring this 200-acre property in the past, but for now it remains unprotected.

Several large parcels over 50 acres in size on Baldwin Hill that are in agricultural use are neither permanently protected nor enrolled in the Chapter 61A program. Cropland on the southeast side of Boice Rd., near the Berle Farm, is also unprotected. For the location of these parcels, see the map of Agriculture and Open Space, Section IV.

B. Public and Nonprofit Parcels

Lands With Permanent Protection

The Federal Department of the Interior/U.S. Park Service owns 303 acres of land bordering the Appalachian Trail in the southeastern part of Egremont. In places this corridor is more than a quarter-mile wide, and in others it is only somewhat wider than the trail itself.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts owns 1,158 acres comprising the Jug End SR-WMA, which is the largest contiguous protected area in Egremont. A corner of the Mount Washington State Forest lies adjacent to Jug End SR-WMA within Egremont's boundaries. Other state-owned parcels include 40 acres bordering Jug End Fen and 86.5 acres along the Appalachian Trail Corridor. DEM and (in the case of Jug End SR-WMA) DFWLE manage these properties.

⁵⁸ *The Karner Brook Watershed: Proposal for Nomination as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991.

The Town of Egremont owns two conservation properties. The first is the Egremont Wildlife Refuge, which is bisected by the Green River on the northern border of town along Rt. 71. The Town also owns 36.9 acres of conserved land on Mount Washington Rd., near Karner Brook. The two town cemeteries, Riverside Cemetery and South Egremont Cemetery, are also under permanent protection.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) owns several parcels near Jug End, including a nearly 17-acre property abutting Jug End Fen and a 36-acre parcel near the Jug End SR-WMA. TNC's charter prevents them from conveying a property to anyone other than another conservation organization, so in effect these properties are permanently protected.

Inventory of Recreational Areas

French Park

The most notable recreation area in Egremont is the 134.6 acre French Park in North Egremont. The Park was established in 1965 as a donation from Mabel French Champion. The Town Board of Selectmen are the designated Trustees of the Park, but an appointed French Park Committee made up of townspeople oversees events and develops ideas for improvements. French Park is not permanently protected, but is widely used and valued among Egremont residents. Theoretically the town could sell the park for development, but this is unlikely, as park operations are financed through a trust set up when the park was donated. Its facilities include baseball diamonds, playground equipment, volleyball, tennis courts, horseback riding trails, and picnic facilities in the summer; ice-skating, cross-country skiing, sledding and snowshoeing in the winter; and nature study, hiking, and hunting year-round.

Lakes and Streams

Prospect Lake is used for swimming, boating and warm-water species fishing, although mainly by private landowners along its banks. Prospect Lake Park, a privately-owned campground, charges a fee for access to its facilities. Nearly the entire shoreline is in private ownership, although there is limited public access in the form of a .34 acre parcel located at Prospect Lake Road. This area is not formally developed for access, with no boat ramps, beach, or parking. Most residents are unaware that this public access exists.⁵⁹

The Green River is a renowned trout stream, and is stocked annually with brown, brook, and rainbow trout. In Egremont, all of the land along the Green River, aside from Riverside Cemetery, is privately owned. In the past, some private landowners have allowed access to the river for fishing and boating from their land. However, littering and abuse of these sites, as well as liability issues, have limited these opportunities.

Smiley's Pond is a popular site for birdwatching, as it is a breeding site for several types of migratory waterfowl.

Catamount Ski Resort

Catamount is the largest private recreation facility in Egremont. The ski area is open

⁵⁹ *Egremont Open Space and Recreation Plan*, 1988.



primarily during the winter months for downhill skiing on several miles of trails. The resort plans to add snowboarding and other winter facilities in the next few years. During the off-season, hikers informally use the ski trails to access the Taconic Trail in New York State.

Jug End State Reservation and Wildlife Management Area

Part of the State's goal in acquiring the Jug End SR-WMA was to provide opportunities for low-impact passive recreation on the site, including hiking, hunting, fishing, trapping, picnicking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and nature study. The management plan for the property includes recommendations for a main trail, plus loop side trails, with hiking and snowshoeing allowed on all trails, and cross-country skiing on "appropriate trails." Horseback riding and mountain biking will be limited to the main loop trail from June 1 to September 30, to minimize damage during wet seasons. In addition, the main loop trail will connect to the Appalachian Trail at the southeastern edge of the property.⁶⁰

Appalachian Trail

The Appalachian Trail cuts through the southeastern end of Egremont, descending from Jug End Mountain and continuing through Sheffield. Only hiking is allowed on the Appalachian Trail, which is used most extensively during the summer months.

Town Roads

Although not formally designated as a recreation area, Egremont's roads are used extensively by residents and visitors for walking, running, and biking. The major regional bike routes that run through Egremont are Rt. 41, a north-south route through Berkshire County, and Rt. 71, by which Berkshire cyclists access Rt. 22 in New York State.

⁶⁰ *Final Management Plan, Jug End SR-WMA*, DEM/DFW, 1996.

Table OS1: Inventory of Open Space Parcels

Map Id #	Site Name/ Location	Owner/Manager	Public Access	Use	Level/ Type of Protection	Size (acres)	# Parcels	Comment
Federal Ownership - Permanent Protection Status Assumed								
F1	Appalachian Trail Corridor, W. of 41	National Park Svc.	Yes	Conservation/ Rec.	Permanent	46.20	4	
F2	Appalachian Trail Corridor, E. of 41	National Park Svc.	Yes	Conservation/ Rec.	Permanent	136.50	7	
F3	Appalachian Trail Corridor, near Jug End	National Park Svc.	Yes	Conservation/ Rec.	Permanent	120.60	4	
						TOTAL ACRES	303.30	
State DEM/DFWELE Ownership - Permanent Protection Status Assumed								
S1	Jug End Fen	DFWELE	Yes	Conservation	Permanent	40.20	1	DFW0144
S2	Jug End State Res. & WMA	DEM/DFWELE	Yes	Conservation/ Rec.	Permanent	1164.60	6	
S3	Jug End State Res. & WMA	DEM/DFWELE	Yes	Conservation/ Rec.	Permanent	2.72	1	
S4	Jug End Appalachian Trail Corridor	DEM	Yes	Conservation/ Rec.	Permanent	86.50	2	
S5	Mount Washington State Forest	DEM	Yes	Conservation/ Rec.	Permanent	22.00	2	
						TOTAL ACRES	1316.02	
Municipal Ownership								
M1	Conservation Land	Town of Egremont	Yes	Conservation	Permanent	36.90	3	
M2	Egremont Conservation Land	Town of Egremont	Yes	Conservation	Permanent	10.86	1	
M3	Elementary School	Town of Egremont	Yes	Education/ Rec.	?	2.46	1	
M4	French Park	Town of Egremont	Yes	Recreation	Limited	136.30	1	
M5	Riverside Cemetery	Town of Egremont	Yes	Historic/Cultural	Permanent	5.10	1	
M6	S. Egremont Cemetery	Town of Egremont	Yes	Historic/Cultural	Permanent	1.74	1	
M7	Town Park	Town of Egremont	Yes	Recreation	Permanent	2.61	1	
						TOTAL ACRES	195.98	
Permanent Conservation/Preservation Restriction or Conservation Ownership - Private/Nonprofit								
P1	Appalachian Trail Conservation Viewshed	Cliff, U.	No	Conservation	Permanent	62.51	3	
P2	Appalachian Trail Corridor - Undermountain Rd.	Kellogg	Yes	Conservation/ Rec.	Permanent	11.17	1	DCS - CR1 & 2 VANZON
P3	Berle APR	Berle, P.	No	Agriculture	Permanent	87.23	2	DFA018 APR
P4	Kellogg APR/ ATC CR	Kellogg, M./ATC	No	Agriculture	Permanent	88.05	2	DFA016

Map Id #	Site Name/ Location	Owner/Manager	Public Access	Use	Level/ Type of Protection	Size (acres)	# Parcels	Comment
								APR
P5	Appalachian Trail Conservation Viewshed	Ginsburg, A.	Yes	Conservation	Permanent	3.44	1	
P6	Appalachian Trail Conservation Viewshed	Ginsburg, L.	Yes	Conservation	Permanent	72.75	2	
P7	Appalachian Trail Conservation Viewshed	Cliff, U.	Yes	Conservation	Permanent	58.19	3	
P8	Turner APR, Baldwin Hill	Turner Farms, Inc.	No	Agriculture	Permanent	203.84	3	
P9	Conservation Land	Berkshire County Limited Trust	?	Conservation	Permanent	216.84	1	
P10	TNC Jug End Conservation	The Nature Conservancy	Yes?	Conservation	Permanent	52.47	2	
P11	TNC Jug End Fen	The Nature Conservancy	Yes?	Conservation	Permanent	24.09	2	
P12	Townhouse Hill Fen	Egremont Land Trust	No.	Conservation	Permanent	9	1	
TOTAL ACRES 889.58								
Temporary Protection - Chapter 61, 61A, 61B Lands								
C1	Ch. Land - NE Corner	Hardymon, G. F.	No	Conservation/ forest	Temporary, Ch. 61	10.31	1	
C2A	Ch. Land - Eg. Plain	Peck, D.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	9.10	1	
C3	Ch. Land - Eg. Plain	Johnson, J.	No	Conservation/ forest	Temporary, Ch. 61	98.08	1	
C4A	Ch. Land - Baldwin Hill	Weigle, W. & Weigle, J.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	36.63	1	
C5A	Ch. Land - Baldwin Hill	Lawrence, T.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	43.75	1	
C6A	Ch. Land - Baldwin Hill	Watson, J. & Stavisky, A.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	31.92	1	
C7	Ch. Land - Rt. 41	Hollmann, W., Trustee	No	Conservation/ forest	Temporary, Ch. 61	51.82	1	
C8A	Ch. Land - Jug End Rd.	Vining, T.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	5.29	1	
C9A	Ch. Land - Rt. 41	Bischoff, U.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	53.29	1	
C10A	Ch. Land - P.L. Rd.	Saxton, D.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	10.77	1	
C11	Ch. Land - Marsh Pond	Farm Cottage Realty Trust	No	Conservation/ forest	Temporary, Ch. 61	47.31	1	
C12	Ch. Land - Marsh Pond	Burdsall, B.	No	Conservation/ forest	Temporary, Ch. 61	32.10	1	
C13	Ch. Land - Townhouse Hill Rd.	Turner Farms, Inc.	No	Conservation/ forest	Temporary, Ch. 61	44.25	1	
C14A	Ch. Land - P.L. Rd.	Saxton, D.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	9.31	1	

Map Id #	Site Name/ Location	Owner/Manager	Public Access	Use	Level/ Type of Protection	Size (acres)	# Parcels	Comment
C15	Ch. Land - P.L. Rd.	Wexler, J.	No	Conservation/ forest	Temporary, Ch. 61	12.89	1	
C15A	Ch. Land - Baldwin Hill NW	Proctor Family Nominee Trust	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	236.50	1	
C16A	Ch. Land - Baldwin Hill	Burdsall, R.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	7.07	1	
C17A	Ch. Land - N. Egremont	Persico, E.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	11.67	1	
C18A	Ch. Land - Gr. River	Rawlings, A.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	22.78	1	
C19A	Ch. Land - Gr. River	Haekel, B.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	58.62	2	
C20A	Ch. Land - Boice Rd.	Bartholf, J.	No	Agriculture	Temporary, Ch. 61A	61.90	2	
TOTAL ACRES						895.35		
Temporary or Limited Protection - Private or Nonprofit Ownership								
L1	Scenic Land	Armstrong	No	Conservation	Limited	3.89	1	ATF Scenic Easement
TOTAL ACRES						3.89		
Key Private or Non-profit Unprotected								
U1	Land NW of Jug End		No	Forest	Unprotected	202.32745	1	
U2	Prospect Lake Camp		Yes	Recreation	Unprotected	22.24	2	
U4	Baldwin Hill		No?	Agriculture?	Unprotected	56.75706	1	
U5	Baldwin Hill		No?	Agriculture?	Unprotected	163.16618	1	
U6	Boice Rd.		No?	?	Unprotected	74.53819	1	
U7	Baldwin Hill/ Creamery Rd.		No?	Agriculture?	Unprotected	78.94285	1	

Sources: MassGIS, Sweetwater Trust Open Space Mapping Project, BRPC, Assessor's Office, Town sources

VI. COMMUNITY GOALS

A. Description of Process

Community goals are expressed in the Egremont Master Plan and in this document. The goals were derived from public input and an assessment of needs. The process used is described in detail in Section II. B. Planning Process and Participation.

B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

The vision statement for the joint Master Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan is stated below:

For the future, as a town, we are committed to:

preserving our rural Berkshire character and our rich natural and cultural heritage;

enhancing our historic villages with their residences and small scale businesses;

fostering a strong spirit of community that recognizes the diversity of our residents and their needs and desires;

and acting with foresight so as to sustain these qualities for future generations.

The following Goals seek to achieve the aspects of this vision related to open space and recreation:

- Encourage the protection and management of open space in order to provide wildlife habitat, protect natural resources, provide recreational opportunities, and maintain scenic views and ridgetops.
- Preserve and support agricultural uses in order to preserve prime farmland and maintain the local farm economy, scenic resources, and community character.
- Preserve and improve the ecological integrity of sensitive natural environments and natural resources.
- Preserve, maintain, and improve the quality of water resources.
- Protect and preserve the character of Egremont's scenic rural roads for recreational as well as transportation purposes.
- Meet community needs for outdoor recreation facilities.

VII. ANALYSIS OF NEEDS

A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs

Egremont has a variety of natural resources, including surface- and groundwater, wildlife habitat, mature forest, prime agricultural soils and working farms, and scenic areas. Protection and management of this extensive inventory of resources has special importance in Egremont due to the high quality and rarity of its natural assets, as well as their contribution to the Town's character and quality of life. Undamaged natural resources ensure functioning ecosystems, which provide benefits such as clean drinking water, fertile soils, and biodiversity. These resources also contribute to the scenic beauty and rural character of the town, which many residents consider a factor in the Town's high quality of life. Public input gathered during the planning process indicates that protecting natural resources is a priority among Egremont residents.

In recent years, protection efforts have increased, and most natural assets are at least partially shielded from the impacts of development and other threats. However, some areas are still in need of greater protection, either from problems that are occurring now, or from issues that may threaten in the future. In this analysis, natural resource needs have been divided into three categories:

- Maintaining Ongoing Protective Efforts
- Addressing Known Current Problems
- Avoiding Impacts of Future Threats

Maintaining Ongoing Protective Efforts

The most effective, albeit sometimes cumbersome way to preserve resources is to legally restrict the activities that can occur on the property where they are located. In Egremont, one of the most important protective efforts in recent years has been the acquisition of land and deed restrictions by conservation organizations such as the Egremont Land Trust, the Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC), and The Nature Conservancy, in cooperation with the Town and local landowners. Through these efforts hundreds of acres of wildlife habitat, farmland, and scenery in Egremont have been protected over the past 15 years. The organizations involved in protecting these lands will need to continue to monitor and manage these properties in the future, as well as responding to future needs.

The State has also been active in protecting land through acquisition, management, and regulation. The acquisition of Jug End as a State Recreation and Wildlife Management Area was a major protective effort, as was the designation of the Karner Brook ACEC. The Department of Agriculture's APR program has also been effective in Egremont, with 3 properties, a total of 379 acres, permanently protected in recent years. The departments responsible for these programs will need to continue to have adequate funding to manage and monitor affected properties.

The Conservation Commission in Egremont continues to review new development that could impact water resources, by enforcing the mandates of the Wetlands Protection Act. State agencies provide similar oversight on large projects planned within the Karner Brook ACEC.

Both of these assessment activities are very important in maintaining the quality of drinking water and wetland habitat, and should be continued at their current level.

The public rarely acknowledges the actions of private landowners with regard to natural resources unless their actions are detrimental. However, many private landowners consciously make efforts to improve the quality of habitat and natural resources on their property. One benefit that is rarely acknowledged is the role of farmers in keeping views open through mowing and other agricultural activities on their property. The actions of private landowners may not continue when the land changes ownership. However, because most of the land in Egremont is privately owned, individual owners, especially of large parcels, can have significant positive contributions to the health and maintenance of natural resources. These efforts, especially by landowners that choose to donate a conservation restriction or otherwise legally protect their land, should be recognized and should continue.

Addressing Current Problems

Water Quality Issues

Prospect Lake suffers from excessive weed growth and appears on the State list of impaired waters. According to a 1991 DEP Diagnostic/Feasibility study of the lake, problems include nutrient loading from agriculture and noxious weed growth. In the past, there has been speculation about septic systems serving homes along the lake that were originally built as summer cottages. Road run-off may also be contributing to the problem. A follow-up to the 1991 study is needed to determine whether water quality has improved or worsened, the causes of contamination, if any, and potential mitigation.

In recent years, wells in various parts of town have been found to be contaminated. One cause of this problem is failed septic systems that leach untreated waste into groundwater. Egremont is particularly susceptible to this problem due to a high water table and soil types that do not often "perk" well. While continued strong enforcement of Title V septic regulations can identify problems and mandate solutions, private septic improvements alone may not offer the most comprehensive solution. There are two current areas of town (S. Egremont Village and Prospect Lake) where the density of development may warrant installation of a well-sited and maintained community sewer system, or multiple shared septic systems, as a means of protecting water quality. The Board of Health has been actively investigating these solutions in the Prospect Lake area, but have been slowed by regulatory obstacles. Based on the number of unbuilt lots near Prospect Lake, DEP has recommended building a "large" size sewer system, which may be too expensive for the Town to build. So far, the Planning Board has ruled that shared septic systems would be in violation of the zoning bylaw, which does not explicitly allow their construction. There is a need for cooperation among Town boards on this issue, if the current water quality problems are to be resolved.

Stormwater runoff from roads may be causing erosion and sedimentation of streams. Egremont has a large number of dirt roads, which if not managed correctly can lose large amounts of dirt and sand during storms, causing siltation and sedimentation in streams and harming rare wetlands. Paved roads also shed a large volume of runoff, which may contain pollutants such as oil and fluids that have leaked from cars. The greatest threat to sensitive wetlands in Egremont is deterioration in the quality of the water that feeds them and the surrounding land. Slight

increases in the nutrient level of the water that feeds a calcareous fen may be enough to turn it into a cattail marsh. A windshield survey performed as part of a 1999 nonpoint source pollution assessment of the Housatonic River watershed found two sites along Egremont's dirt roads that showed evidence of erosion, a site in the Millard Rd. subdivision, and a parking area on Boice Rd. These two areas are in need of immediate attention. A more detailed examination of town roads should be performed to identify any other stormwater problems and address them.

Development on Hillsides and Ridgelines

Although relatively low in overall elevation compared to neighboring towns like Mount Washington, Egremont does have hills and ridgelines that can be seen prominently from lower areas of the Town. Recent technological advances have made it easier to place buildings on steep slopes that would have been virtually undevelopable before, and the Town has seen many of these seemingly precariously perched homes built in the last few years, in prominent places such as the ridge west of Prospect Lake. The views that ridge-top houses afford for their residents often mar views of the hillside for the public at large, and may also have a negative affect on overall property values.

Hilltop development can also have environmental impacts. Steeper areas often have thin soils and rocky outcrops that make them more sensitive to the impacts of construction and development and more prone to erosion. The roads leading up to these structures may increase runoff on these fragile soils and contribute to erosion as well. Egremont may need to guide and/or limit the siting of structures on hillsides and ridgelines in order to minimize their impact on views and the environment (there is more discussion on this issue in the next sub-section on Avoiding Future Threats).

Development Along Roadsides

Residential development along existing roads, as opposed to within subdivisions, is a trend that has been occurring throughout Berkshire County, and Egremont is no exception. This pattern has come about because of state and local regulations that make it is easier to develop along a road than to build a new subdivision. Lots that have "practical and efficient" access to a public way are not subject to subdivision bylaws, nor is it necessary to construct a private road to the interior of the property. The majority of new development in Egremont in the last few years has occurred along existing roads. If this pattern of "rural sprawl" continues, it will change the character of the Town's roadsides significantly.

Incentives within subdivision or zoning regulations to develop "conservation subdivisions" or use shared driveways can reduce obtrusive development along roads, as well as conserving interior areas of open space to some extent. Vegetative screening and other "soft" solutions can reduce some of visual impacts of buildings along roads as well.

Invasive Species

Although a comprehensive study of invasives has not been performed in Egremont, invasive species such as purple loosestrife, *phragmites*, and garlic mustard are widespread in wetlands and uplands in the Northeast and Berkshire County and are almost undoubtedly present in Egremont. In sufficient numbers, these invasives can outcompete native species and reduce biodiversity. This is especially threatening in habitats that support rare species. The Nature

Conservancy is currently testing ways to combat invasives in South Berkshire County. The quantity and spread of invasive species in Egremont's rare habitat areas should be monitored and controlled if possible.

Light Pollution

Living relatively far away from urban centers, Egremont residents are accustomed to being able to view a full range of constellations on clear nights. However, recently residents have complained of streetlights that mar views of the night sky and detract from the rural character of the town, particularly along Rt. 23 and with night skiing at Catamount Ski Resort. The town may need to investigate ways to reduce light pollution while maintaining safe conditions for drivers.

Avoiding Future Threats

In the future, the greatest threat to Egremont's natural resources will likely be impacts from residential development in vulnerable areas. As noted in Section III-D, a recent build-out analysis for the Town indicates that thousands of acres of land are potentially developable. Threats to resources can be tied to the volume, location, and/or form of development. The volume of potential development would be decreased by protection of more land and by decreasing zoning density, particularly in sensitive environmental areas (refer to Section VII-B. Community Needs, for a short discussion of related factors). Even a small number of new buildings could cause significant impacts if sited in a sensitive environmental area and/or if the area is greatly disturbed. Below are some of the resource areas in Egremont most vulnerable to development impacts:

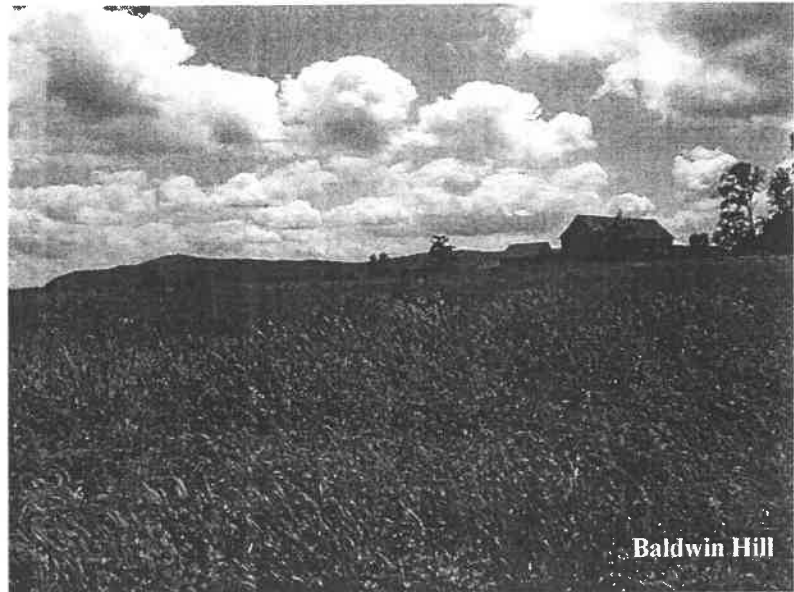
Development of Agricultural Areas

Agriculture has been a part of life in Egremont since the Town was settled, and continues to play a role even as farming has declined overall in Berkshire County. Farming and the farm landscape are an integral part of Egremont's rural character. One of the places in Egremont most loved by residents and visitors alike is Baldwin Hill, with its pastoral landscape and 360-degree views; views that are made possible by the cleared agricultural fields at the crest of the hill. Baldwin Hill is also of regional agricultural importance because it is the largest contiguous area of active farms located on prime agricultural soil in Berkshire County. Clusters of high-quality crop- and pastureland also lie to the north along the Green River and to the south near Rt. 41. In the northeast corner of town, farms stretch over the borders of Alford and Great Barrington, forming a swath of fields and pastures. All these factors attest to the importance of Egremont's working farms, both in terms of scenic beauty and agricultural quality.

However, despite its importance to the Town and the region, nearly all of the approximately 2,300 acres of farmland in Egremont remain vulnerable to development. Baldwin Hill, the center of the Egremont map as well as the agricultural center of the town, remains largely unprotected despite its scenic and agricultural value. Only three Egremont farms—16.5% of the total 2,300 acres—are permanently protected through the State's APR program. An additional 26% are enrolled in the Chapter 61A program, which offers tax incentives for the landowner to keep his land in agricultural use, and penalties if the land is taken out of agriculture or developed while still in the program. However, high market prices for developable land make tax penalties less convincing for landowners. Egremont's farmland may be put under development pressure in

the near future, as this land is generally relatively level, has soils suitable for development, and is cleared of trees. Rich agricultural soils and distance from the village centers potentially make these remaining clusters of farmland good candidates for continued agricultural use. Egremont will need to plan ahead to retain its working farms in the future, before development pressure increases.

See the map of Agriculture and Open Space, Section IV, to see the location of protected agricultural lands.



The following are several options landowners or the town of Egremont might pursue to preserve appropriate properties as productive farmland:

1. Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program^{61,62}

The Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture (DFA) runs the State's Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program (Mass. Gen. Law Ch. 132A, Sec. 11A-11D). Through the APR program, owners of farmland may sell a permanent restriction on their property to the state, preserving it for agricultural use forever. The owner retains full ownership and the ability to sell or convey the property to a family member or to anyone else. However, activities that would compromise the ability of the land to be used for agriculture, such as development other than farm-related structures, are limited by the restriction on the deed. Typically farmers are allowed to build agricultural buildings or residences for farm workers or farm family members, but cannot subdivide the property.

Priority farms for the APR program are those that are located on prime agricultural soils and have high agricultural output. Factors such as the strength of the farming community and the farmland protection activities in the region also may affect whether the farm becomes a candidate for APR purchase. There is a limited amount of state funding, so not every farm can be chosen.

The first step in the APR program is for a landowner to contact DFA and request an application. The application asks for information on qualities such as soil types and agricultural productivity. Often local land trusts will review the application by request of the landowner before he or she submits it. Local organizations might also write letters of support for the APR designation. The next step is review by the Lands Committee, who votes on each application to determine a pool

⁶¹ *Trustees of Reservations, Land Conservation Options: A Guide for Massachusetts Landowners. 1998.*

⁶² *Conversation with Leslie Reed Evans, Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation, 12/20/99.*

of candidates. The program will then obtain an appraisal of each property, as well as soil engineering or surveying if necessary. Once this step is completed, negotiations as to the sale price of the APR may begin with the landowner. The maximum price the state will pay for an APR is \$10,000/acre, but recent sale prices for APRs in Berkshire County have generally in the \$1500/acre range. (Note that this is just the price of the restriction, not the entire property).

The State APR program has an advantage in that it has a fairly stable source of funding and can afford to purchase APRs outright, although there may be up to three years lag time between the sale agreement and the actual receipt of a check by the landowner. Sometimes the landowner will agree to a system of installments instead of one lump sum, for tax purposes.

The Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture manages the APR program and should be contacted for complete information.

2. Chapter 61A

Massachusetts' Chapter 61A program is one of three related measures—61, 61A, and 61B—that substantially reduce property taxes on eligible forestland, agricultural or horticultural land, and open space and recreational land. Chapter 61A applies to land that has been actively devoted to agricultural or horticultural uses during the present tax year and for the previous two tax years. The land is assessed at a reduced rate determined by the Commonwealth's Farmland Valuation Advisory Commission, reducing the amount of property tax due. This reduced assessment is valid for ten years, providing that the owner does not sell the land for a non-agricultural, non-horticultural use, or alter the land in a way that would change the agricultural/horticultural use. Penalties apply if the land becomes ineligible or is withdrawn from the program during these 10 years. In addition, the municipality has a 120-day right of first refusal option to match the buyer's offer, in the event of a proposed sale or development that would remove the land from the program. For a complete description of program requirements a landowner may call the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture.⁶³ Chapter 61A does not alter the deed for the property nor protect it permanently.

3. Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs are a relatively new way of approaching farmland preservation at the local level, through zoning ordinances. TDR programs allow landowners to transfer the right to develop one parcel of land to a different parcel of land. TDR can protect farmland by shifting development from agricultural areas to areas planned for growth. Once the development rights have been transferred, an agricultural preservation restriction is placed on the property. Buying development rights generally allows landowners to build at a higher density than is ordinarily permitted by the base zoning. TDR has an advantage over simple purchase of development rights programs in that it allows the transaction to occur between private landowners and developers, with approval from local governments.⁶⁴

4. Agricultural Preservation Zoning

Although zoning that excludes all but agricultural uses is not permitted under Massachusetts law, a zoning bylaw can be changed to support agricultural uses. For instance, Amherst has a bylaw

⁶³ *Trustees of Reservations, Land Conservation Options: A Guide for Massachusetts Landowners, 1998.*

⁶⁴ *American Farmland Trust, Fact Sheet: The Farmland Protection Toolbox, 1998, p. 6-7.*

that requires new residential development within the agricultural preservation overlay zone to be clustered on areas least suitable for agriculture and livestock. The bylaw also requires road and drainage systems to be designed so they have the least possible impact on agricultural lands and uses, and that existing views of agricultural land should be maintained.⁶⁵

5. Agricultural Preservation Restrictions

Local land trusts will often accept APRs on properties they feel are good candidates for preservation, without the lengthy application process the state requires. Landowners have three options—donating the restriction, offering it as a bargain sale (a price lower than the actual value of the restriction), and selling the restriction at full price. If donating the restriction or selling it as a bargain sale, the landowner can claim the full or bargain price as a tax deduction. The land trust would hold the APR and monitor the property annually to make sure that the terms of the restriction are not violated.⁶⁶

Land trusts also often act as middlemen, helping to secure a property until it is able to be enrolled in a state program. Recently the Berkshire Natural Resource Council played this role with a farm on Baldwin Hill, buying the property, selling an APR to the state, and then conveying the property to a farm family to keep the parcel in agricultural production.⁶⁷

Development of Fragile Habitat

Egremont is home to several areas that provide habitat for rare species, one of the most significant being the wetlands along Karner Brook, including Jug End Fen. Although the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act mandates a 100-foot buffer surrounding the wetlands, the actual habitat area may extend outside the boundary the Conservation Commission oversees. These wetlands are also likely affected by the drainage running from Rt. 23 and possibly Mt. Washington and Jug End Roads. Development in this area, especially south of Rt. 23, would likely affect the quality of this wetland habitat, which is rated of High Significance by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. The Karner Brook ACEC requires MEPA review of large proposed projects, but does not create oversight of single-family home development. Aside from small parcels owned by the State and the Nature Conservancy, the land surrounding the Karner Brook wetlands is not protected and might be vulnerable to development, especially along Mount Washington and Jug End Roads.

Jug End Mountain is also significant habitat. The part of Jug End Mountain within Egremont's borders is mainly protected through State and Federal ownership, but some small parcels are not restricted and could be developed.

Although not necessarily home to rare species, other types of wildlife habitat are also sensitive to the impacts of development. Relatively undeveloped forest areas in Egremont, particularly along the western edge of the Town, provide habitat for species that need a large range, such as black bear, bobcat, and fisher, or that prefer deep forest, such as hermit and wood thrush. Habitat fragmentation through development, incompatible logging practices, or road building is a threat

⁶⁵ *Massachusetts Historical Commission, Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances, 1999.*

⁶⁶ *Trustees of Reservations, Land Conservation Options: A Guide for Massachusetts Landowners, 1998.*

⁶⁷ *Conversation with George Wislacki, BNRC, 12/21/1999.*

to this forest habitat. Fragmentation of the landscape can also lead to the spread of invasive species, as the forest canopy is opened, allowing invasive vegetation to spread inwards from the forest edge.

Development on Hillsides and Ridgelines

As discussed previously, development on hillsides, ridgelines, and steep slopes is happening in Egremont currently and will likely increase in the future. Slopes on the western edge of Town in particular are likely to see expansion of development in the future, both because of the views they afford and because there are already roads in this area. As development on hillsides, ridgelines, and slopes increases, so will its impacts.

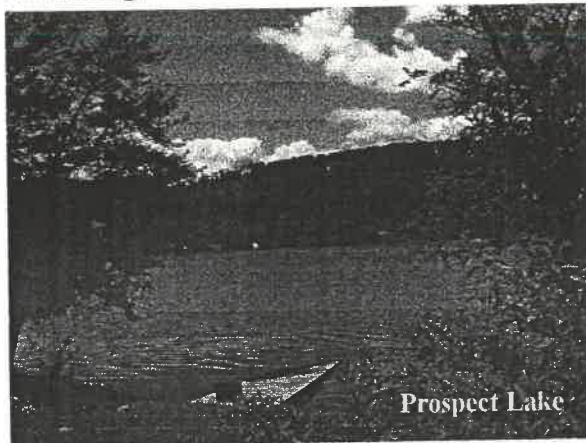
Appendix J explains one possible option to address this need; the Scenic Mountain Act. Another option would be to extend the current Jug End overlay district to cover other mountainous areas in town. If this option is pursued, some provisions for this zone may need to be revised. For either of these options, the regulations should be aimed at limiting new site development rather than relatively benign use of existing sites.

B. Summary of Community's Needs

Recreation

Access to Water

Egremont already has a diverse range of outdoor recreational facilities, as noted in the Inventory of Recreational Areas (Section V). The most critical area in which the Town lacks facilities is public swimming access. Both respondents to the Community Survey and participants at the Community Forum noted this need; 73% of survey respondents who said they participated in swimming indicated that they would like new or improved facilities. The body of water in



Egremont most appropriate for swimming is Prospect Lake, but current public access to the lake is inadequate, with limited safe parking, and no structures to aid boating or swimming. The 1988 Egremont Open Space & Recreation Plan identified the need for swimming access at Prospect Lake, but the Town has not yet addressed the problem. In order for public access to increase, the Town may need to purchase or lease a parcel along the lake and find alternatives to the current parking area.

Some residents and visitors to Egremont use the Green River for fishing and other types of recreation. However, there have been problems with this activity because there are no access points in Egremont that are located on public land. Landowners report abuse of informal access points on their land including littering and degradation of the riverbank. Unlike Karner Brook, the Green River is not the Town's water supply; and while it does provide valuable aquatic and riparian habitat, the Green River does not have the same concentration of rare species as Karner Brook, making it a more appropriate resource for recreation. The Green River also flows in proximity to North Egremont Village,

French Park, and Egremont Plain, potentially allowing pedestrian access. There is a need to prevent abuses and encourage conservation along the Green River, possibly through a conservation area and/or designated access point(s) regulated by the Town.

Trails

Egremont's residents have a variety of trails available for walking, hiking, birdwatching, and winter activities, including the Appalachian Trail and trails in the Jug End Reservation and French Park. Existing trails in French Park might be expanded and improved, especially for winter cross-country skiing use. Pedestrian links among trails in Egremont and regional trails such as the Appalachian Trail and the Taconic Trail in New York might be improved as well.

Other Recreational Activities

The Community Survey indicated a desire among residents for ice-skating facilities, which do not exist currently in Town. 83% of survey respondents who said they participated in ice-skating said they would like new facilities. Most of the natural lakes and ponds in Egremont are unsuitable for this activity, due to lack of access by cars and/or fragile habitat area. It might be possible to create a small man-made outdoor ice-skating pond through flooding of parking lots, tennis courts, or other areas at Catamount Ski Area or the Egremont Country Club in Great Barrington.

Catamount Ski Area holds the potential for increased year-round uses besides downhill skiing. The owner reports informal use of the ski trails during the summer to access the Taconic Trail in New York State, although the ski area does not accept responsibility for these activities. Additional summer uses of Catamount should be explored.

Linking Open Space to Development and Density Alternatives

While some of the changes recommended in the Resource Needs subsection could be achieved through minor changes to existing zoning, what is really required in Egremont is a richer, more flexible set of zoning bylaws. Sometimes community housing needs can be addressed at the same time that open space is preserved. Conservation subdivision design can be allowed through zoning with smaller lots that are closer together, combined with a minimum amount of valuable continuous open space that is under permanent protection through a conservation restriction. Incentives to create this type of subdivision would also reduce the volume of development along roads. Development can be carefully guided through a special permit and subdivision process. The developer and the Planning Board must work together cooperatively to make the process amenable to both.

Preserving open space and meeting other community needs can be linked through a comprehensive land use plan. To meet future community housing needs, including affordable and senior housing, the Master Plan will need to identify preferred areas for some level of additional housing. The community has expressed an interest in accommodating additional housing within the more densely-developed villages, instead of the more rural parts of town. A Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, as mentioned in the Resource Needs subsection on agricultural lands, could simultaneously reduce development in open space areas, while allowing more housing near the villages. Although this idea was noted in the 1976 Egremont Land Use Plan, it appears to not have been advocated or pursued since then. If the

town does choose to reduce the supply of developable land and increase lot sizes, without also creating housing alternatives, home prices (and affordability to full-time residents) could potentially increase.

C. Management Needs, Potential Change of Use

Open Space

As noted previously, many local residents and organizations are currently involved in ongoing conservation efforts in Egremont. These efforts need to continue. One recommendation of this plan is that the Egremont Land Trust become more active in agricultural issues and in coordinating efforts to keep farmlands in farm use. In order to do so, the Land Trust may need to partner with the Town more extensively. The Land Trust could seek public support for applying a portion of property or transfer taxes for conservation-preservation, as is expected to be allowed by state law soon. The Select Board and the Land Trust need to work more cooperatively in evaluating and responding to Chapter land properties as their status changes. Another suggestion is that the Planning Board and a regionally based land trust work with an organization like BRPC to explore a TDR program that can be administered on the local level but be supported on a regional level.

Conservation Commissions often spend most or all of their limited time on implementation of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. With more time available, the Egremont Conservation Commission could play a role in planning, education and other protection initiatives, working with the Planning Board and other organizations. Additionally, the Planning Board, as the chief regulatory body on land use issues, may not currently have the resources to pursue all the actions that are suggested or recommended in the Open Space and Recreation Plan and in the Master Plan. Administrative assistance for the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission would help free up time for their members to concentrate an adequate portion of their time on implementation of items in this Plan within their realm.

Recreation

Currently, the only entity that exists to manage town recreation facilities is the French Park Committee, which is appointed by the French Park Trustees (a.k.a. the Board of Selectmen). At the Egremont Community Forum held in April 2000, two ad hoc committees were formed to address the need for access to Prospect Lake and trails in French Park. There is a need to combine the efforts of these entities if recreational opportunities are to improve in Egremont. This plan recommends the expansion of the current recreation group, to be re-named the French Park and Recreation Committee.

VIII. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Open Space

A. Encourage the protection and management of open space in order to provide wildlife habitat, protect natural resources, provide recreational opportunities, and maintain scenic views and ridgetops.

1. Protect open spaces that contribute greatly to scenic views.
2. Protect hillsides, ridgetops, and steep slopes, and work with surrounding communities to link protected mountain areas.
3. Protect large undeveloped forest tracts from habitat fragmentation.

B. Preserve and support agricultural uses in order to preserve prime farmland and maintain the local farm economy, scenic resources, and community character.

1. Permanently protect farmland, with priority give to land that has prime agricultural soils, and/or is within a cluster of active farmland, and/or is a significant scenic resource.
2. Minimize development impacts to priority farm areas.
3. Improve economic viability of local farms.

C. Preserve and improve the ecological integrity of sensitive natural environments and natural resources.

1. Achieve gradual permanent protection of the Jug End Fen/ Smiley's Pond wetlands, Marsh Pond, Schenob Brook inflow, and land surrounding these two areas.
2. Protect vernal pool habitat and wetlands.

D. Preserve, maintain, and improve the quality of water resources.

1. Improve water quality at Prospect Lake.
2. Maintain and improve the water quality of rivers and streams.

Recreation

E. Protect and preserve the character of Egremont's scenic rural roads for recreational as well as transportation purposes.

1. Modify roadside management practices along identified roads to preserve their scenic rural character, while maintaining safety.
2. When development will occur, promote preferred design alternatives along any scenic road.
3. Designate and maintain preferred routes that are safe for pedestrians and cyclists.

F. Meet community needs for outdoor recreation facilities.

1. Improve swimming access at Prospect Lake.
2. Support a system of well-maintained local trails with links to state, regional and national trails.
3. Support access to new or expanded local recreation activities.

IX. FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

Objectives and Actions

Note: All OS/R actions are assigned to a discrete group of suggested leadership organizations. This does not necessarily denote direct action in all cases, as the suggested leadership organization may recruit others and/or monitor progress on the action.

Objective and Suggested Actions	Suggested Leadership
A-1 Protect open spaces that contribute greatly to scenic views. Continue to prioritize scenic areas, with strong consideration of other open space values, and pursue purchase of scenic easements on prioritized areas, such as Baldwin Hill.	Egremont Land Trust
A-2 Protect hillsides, ridgetops, and steep slopes, and work with surrounding communities to link protected mountain areas. Achieve gradual permanent protection of mountain ridges and steep slopes through voluntary deed restrictions or fee simple acquisition. Recommend and adopt a zoning amendment, following incorporation of public hearing input, to restrict building on steep slopes. Delineate/define Mountain/Hillside Overlay District using the Slope and Elevation OSR map as a starting source. Coordinate delineation of area with adjacent towns. Define regulations for Mountain/Hillside Overlay District, using Jug End district regulations as one starting source. Coordinate form of regulations with adjacent towns. Recommend and adopt zoning amendments or conservation commission regulations, following incorporation of public hearing input, for Mountain Hillside District. Continue to coordinate oversight and protection of mountain areas with other towns and regional organizations.	Egremont Land Trust Planning Board Planning Board and Conservation Commission Planning Board and Conservation Commission Planning Board and Conservation Commission Planning Board and Conservation Commission
A-3 Protect large undeveloped forest tracts from habitat fragmentation. Support Forest Legacy Program Accept conservation restrictions on properties that qualify for the Forest Legacy program and work with local conservation orgs to monitor them. (Properties already under Chapter 61 will be considered.)	Select Board Conservation Commission
B-1 Permanently protect farmland, with priority given to land that has prime agricultural soils, and/or is within a cluster of active farmland, and/or is a significant scenic resource. Assist landowners in applying for the State APR program. Work with landowners to protect parcels via voluntary deed restrictions. Capitalize on the Town's right-of-first-refusal to protect prime agricultural lands under the Chapter 61A program.	Egremont Land Trust, BNRC Egremont Land Trust Egremont Land Trust, Selectmen
B-2 Minimize development impacts to priority farm areas. In priority farm areas, designate a farmland protection overlay zone with provisions that encourage clustering of residential development when a subdivision is proposed. Explore creation of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, or other technique(s) that encourage preservation of large tracts of land, potentially as part of the farmland protection overlay zone.	Planning Board Planning Board, Egremont Land Trust
B-3 Improve economic viability of local farms. Continue creative land ownership arrangements to make farmland more affordable to farmers, using Indian Line Farm as an example. Encourage participation in the Berkshire Grown program to promote consumption of locally-grown foods. Encourage full-time and part-time residents to connect with local farming through activities such as farm tours, harvest festivals, and community supported agriculture.	Egremont Land Trust, Community Land Trust Egremont Land Trust, Berkshire Grown Egremont Land Trust, Berkshire Food & Land Council

Encourage agricultural use of cleared tillable acres not currently in active use.	Egremont Land Trust, Berkshire Food & Land Council
Consider other options such as partial use of a farm(s) for agricultural education and tourism if this will help to preserve farmland.	Egremont Land Trust, Berkshire Food & Land Council
C-1 Achieve gradual permanent protection of the Jug End Fen/ Smiley's Pond wetlands, Marsh Pond, Schenob Brook inflow, and land surrounding these two areas.	
Identify and contact landowners in priority wetland areas to discuss property plans and options.	Egremont Land Trust, Nature Conservancy
Where feasible, protect Jug End Fen/ Smiley's Pond, Marsh Pond, and Schenob Brook inflow areas (in that order of priority), possibly as wildlife preserves, through voluntary deed restrictions or fee simple acquisition.	Egremont Land Trust, Nature Conservancy
C-2 Protect vernal pool habitat and wetlands.	
Educate property owners about identifying and protecting vernal pools and wetlands.	Conservation Commission, Nature Conservancy
Identify and register vernal pools each spring, and monitor them in successive years.	Conservation Commission, Nature Conservancy
D-1 Improve water quality at Prospect Lake.	
Conduct follow-up to 1991 Diagnostic/Feasibility study to determine specific sources of contamination at Prospect Lake that remain in need of mitigation.	Board of Health
Investigate installing a limited community sewer system for the dense development along Prospect Lake.	Board of Health
Actively participate in programs of the Lake and Ponds Association of Western Massachusetts (LAPA-West).	Board of Health, Prospect Lake Association
Educate landowners along Prospect Lake about Best Management Practices such as vegetated buffers.	Conservation Commission, Prospect Lake Association
Ensure that recreational use does not degrade water quality.	Conservation Commission, PLA
D-2 Maintain and improve the water quality of rivers and streams.	
Consider designating the Green River as a conservation area with special protections similar to Great Barrington. Settlement areas near the river should be considered differently than undeveloped areas.	Planning Board, Conservation Commission
Work with landowners toward voluntary establishment of a linked protected greenway along the river for conservation purposes	Egremont Land Trust
Increase voluntary citizen activities/outreach through a "Stream Team" day each summer to monitor the water quality of streams. Start with the Green River and Karner Brook	Conservation Commission
Protect watershed near water supply through source water assessment program (SWAP).	Conservation Commission
Increase number of local residents involved in regional watershed team activities who can distribute information and educate local landowners about proper streamside management practices.	Conservation Commission
D-3 Identify and mitigate stormwater runoff problems on town roads.	
Conduct annual monitoring of roads that run near streams, preferably during or immediately after heavy spring rains to identify stormwater runoff problems.	Conservation Commission
Implement Best Management Practices for dirt and paved roads, using both "hard" engineering and "soft" landscaping solutions to reduce runoff, starting with problem areas on Boice Rd. and Millard Rd.	Conservation Commission, Road Commission
E-1 Modify roadside management practices along identified roads to preserve their scenic rural character, while maintaining safety.	
Recommend written policy for Town roadside maintenance that distinguishes different road types by nature and character.	Planning Board, working with Roads Commission
Adopt a policy for roadside maintenance that will minimize cutting of roadside vegetation and paving.	Select Board, Road Commission

Reconsider a bylaw for scenic roads.	Planning Board
E-2 When development will occur, promote preferred design alternatives along any scenic road.	Planning Board
Develop a set of voluntary design guidelines to encourage less obtrusive siting of new structures along scenic roads, through vegetative screening, etc.	Planning Board
Consider zoning provisions for common driveways.	Planning Board
E-3 Designate and maintain preferred routes that are safe for pedestrians and cyclists.	French Park and Recreation Commission (formerly Citizens French Park Committee)
Consider designating a town scenic bike route linked to regional bike routes.	French Park and Recreation Commission, Roads Commission
Develop safety measures appropriate to the character of specific roads. Maintain (or support State maintenance of) adequate shoulders on most frequently used bike/ped routes.	French Park and Recreation Commission, Roads Commission
Post "Share the Road" signs in frequently used areas to notify visiting drivers of the presence of pedestrians, hikers, and cyclists. Co-site w/ existing signs and limit amount of signs to an unobtrusive number.	French Park and Recreation Commission, Roads Commission
Implement traffic calming measures for roads mainly used for local traffic and recreation.	French Park and Recreation Commission, Roads Commission
F-1 Improve swimming access at Prospect Lake.	French Park and Recreation Commission
Explore options for improving resident access to swimming at/through Prospect Lake Camp.	French Park and Recreation Commission
Investigate feasibility of Town purchasing or leasing (long term) specific parcel(s) along the lake for public swimming.	French Park and Recreation Commission, Town (Selectboard?)
Design and provide increased public parking or find/create an alternative to accommodate more cars and a ramp for non-motorized boats.	French Park and Recreation Commission
If town funds are necessary for operation and maintenance of public swimming facilities, assess a user fee (up to double for non-residents) thru a vehicle sticker or day use tag for parking. Require a signed liability release.	French Park and Recreation Commission
F-2 Support a system of well-maintained local trails with links to state, regional and national trails.	French Park and Recreation Commission
Direct and approve design of a conceptual plan for expansion of existing hiking/X-C skiing trails in French Park.	French Park and Recreation Commission
Secure construction funding, complete any necessary basic engineering and expand existing hiking/ X-C skiing trails in French Park, utilizing volunteer labor to keep costs low.	French Park and Recreation Commission, volunteers
Create and implement a simple workable plan for French Park trail maintenance.	French Park and Recreation Commission
Help maintain one primary, and possibly one secondary, well maintained link(s) between Jug End Reservation and the Appalachian Trail.	French Park and Recreation Commission, Roads Commission
Support appropriate trailhead parking at Jug End	Egremont Land Trust, French Park and Recreation Commission
Support scenic buffer protection along Appalachian Trail and other hiking trails.	French Park and Recreation Commission
F-3 Support access to new or expanded local recreation activities.	French Park and Recreation Commission
Create additional cross country skiing and ice skating opportunities for town residents at Catamount Ski Area or the Egremont Country Club, working with owners and creating a "club" for town residents with flexible fees to increase universal access.	French Park and Recreation Commission
Work with Catamount Ski Area to diversify uses and year round activities in environmentally sensitive, yet economically sustainable ways.	French Park and Recreation Commission
Investigate options for greater access to the Green River (such as a pull-over parking area w/ river	French Park and Recreation Commission

access) for fishing and bird watching. Link access to conservation greenway.	Commission.
Encourage/support state purchase of land or easements and support/guide Green River access improvements.	French Park and Recreation Commission
Consider a short nature trail along the Green River to incorporate educational/interpretive aspects of the riparian habitat, if and where landowners are receptive. Explore pedestrian linkage of natural trail with N. Egremont Village and trails in French Park, also utilizing existing roads.	French Park and Recreation Commission, Egremont Land Trust
G-1 Expedite the local and state review of the Draft Open Space/Recreation Plan and prepare for further specialized planning and implementation.	
Distribute Draft Plan to organizations for review and comment.	Steering Committee
Meet with key organizations, including the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Egremont Land Trust, and French Park Committee to solicit commitments on OSR Plan oversight and Action Plan activities and comment letters, and will hold a public meeting for presentation/ input.	Steering Committee
Recommend and submit Draft Plan to State Division of Conservation Services for review.	Steering Committee
Finalize the OS/R Plan, addressing State suggestions (for consistency about the same time as the Master Plan is finalized).	Steering Committee, working with key organizations.
G-2 Monitor progress on the OS/R Action Plan.	
Hold an annual meeting of the core leadership groups to assess progress, and make necessary adjustments while remaining committed to the thrust of the Plan	Key leadership groups
G-3 Adopt the Egremont Master Plan.	
Take all necessary actions within a framework that considers community needs and land uses for the long range future.	Planning Board
G-4 Ensure coordination of town outdoor recreational offerings.	
Expand the French Park Committee to oversee outdoor recreation in other parts of town with greater responsibility. Rename it the French Park and Recreation Commission. Include Select Board (current Trustees of French Park) on Commission.	French Park and Recreation Commission

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS

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XII. APPENDICES

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Appendix A: Community Survey Results

Results are from 396 surveys tabulated as of 4/4/2000. Response rate: 42%.

EGREMONT COMMUNITY PLANNING SURVEY

Note: Thank you for filling out this survey. If there are other persons in your household beside yourself, you may wish to complete this survey together or otherwise try to include their opinions.

LIVING IN EGREMONT

1. Please indicate which of the following are important to you in describing the character of Egremont as it exists today?

	Very important	Important	Not important	TOTAL
natural beauty of landscape	90%	9%	1%	383
open farmland	71%	25%	3%	378
rivers, streams, lakes and ponds	86%	13%	1%	383
forests, mountains & uplands	85%	14%	1%	381
wildlife populations	65%	29%	6%	378
open spaces throughout town	66%	29%	6%	368
rural roads	60%	34%	6%	371
rural small town atmosphere	78%	19%	3%	378
the North and South Egremont historic village centers	66%	27%	6%	364
historic areas outside villages	47%	43%	10%	369
small scale local businesses	55%	40%	6%	372
other (explain)	87%	13%		30

2. What is the longest time any member of your household has lived in Egremont?

4% less than 1 yr	20% 11 to 20	
17% 1 to 5	15% 21 to 30	
16% 6 to 10	28% More than 30 yrs	
TOTAL: 389		

3. Is this a seasonal/second home or your permanent residence?

Seasonal/Second 33% Permanent 67% TOTAL: 391

4. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Egremont?

Excellent 57% Good 40% Average 3% Poor 3% TOTAL: 391

TOWN SERVICES & RECREATION

5. Please indicate whether you think the following services are adequately provided in town. Also, please check the box to the right if that service is used by you or your family.

	Adequate	Not Adequate	Use Service or Facility	TOTAL
police	97%	3%	N/A	357
fire	98%	2%	N/A	352
ambulance	97%	3%	N/A	335
road maintenance	92%	8%	N/A	365
parks and recreation	87%	13%		351
school facilities	89%	11%		247
educational programs	72%	28%		220
elderly services	76%	24%		193
public transportation	33%	67%		215
health services	74%	26%		213
public water	70%	30%		226
community activities	66%	34%		243
community center	49%	51%		204

6. If you marked any of the "Not Adequate" boxes on the previous question please answer this question.

Although it might be possible to pursue grants, step up voluntary organizational efforts, etc. local funds might be required to improve services. For the items you marked "Not Adequate", check any of the following improvement funding options that you might support.

	Reallocate use of existing tax dollars	Increase taxes	Add/ increase user fees
police	74%	26%	N/A
fire	78%	22%	
ambulance	50%	33%	17%
road maintenance	74%	26%	N/A
parks and recreation	52%	27%	21%
school facilities	44%	39%	17%
educational programs	76%	24%	N/A
elderly services	57%	36%	8%
public transportation	67%	32%	N/A
health services	55%	25%	20%
public water supply	46%	27%	27%
community activities	53%	16%	31%
community center	41%	26%	33%

7. Any specific suggestions to improve a service(s)?

8. Which of the following recreational activities do members of your household participate in, in Egremont. Please also indicate if you think facility improvements are needed.

	Participate In	Would like new or improved facilities	TOTAL
a. walking/running	92% <input type="checkbox"/>	8% <input type="checkbox"/>	325
b. bicycling	84% <input type="checkbox"/>	16% <input type="checkbox"/>	211
c. swimming	58% <input type="checkbox"/>	42% <input type="checkbox"/>	203
d. hunting/shooting sports	93% <input type="checkbox"/>	8% <input type="checkbox"/>	52
e. horseback riding	73% <input type="checkbox"/>	27% <input type="checkbox"/>	48
f. rollerblading/skateboarding	44% <input type="checkbox"/>	56% <input type="checkbox"/>	45
g. ice skating	54% <input type="checkbox"/>	46% <input type="checkbox"/>	103
h. tennis	75% <input type="checkbox"/>	25% <input type="checkbox"/>	116
i. hiking/birdwatching	94% <input type="checkbox"/>	6% <input type="checkbox"/>	216
j. x-c skiing	80% <input type="checkbox"/>	20% <input type="checkbox"/>	129
k. downhill skiing	92% <input type="checkbox"/>	8% <input type="checkbox"/>	119
l. snowmobiling	59% <input type="checkbox"/>	41% <input type="checkbox"/>	17
m. boating	77% <input type="checkbox"/>	23% <input type="checkbox"/>	69
n. fishing	85% <input type="checkbox"/>	15% <input type="checkbox"/>	91
o. camping	83% <input type="checkbox"/>	17% <input type="checkbox"/>	47
p. picnicking	91% <input type="checkbox"/>	9% <input type="checkbox"/>	126
q. dancing/aerobics	68% <input type="checkbox"/>	32% <input type="checkbox"/>	44
r. team sports	67% <input type="checkbox"/>	33% <input type="checkbox"/>	24
s. other	63% <input type="checkbox"/>	38% <input type="checkbox"/>	24

Would you generally support more town funding for recreational facility improvements for activities above?

Yes ☐ 40% No ☐ 26% Unsure/No opinion ☐ 34% TOTAL: 368

List letters corresponding to rec. facility improvements that you would specifically support a tax increase for (example: c, g)

9. Do you feel there is a strong sense of community in Egremont? Yes ☐ 67% No ☐ 33% TOTAL: 347

IF NO, would you like to see Egremont's sense of community strengthened? Yes ☐ 64% No ☐ 16% TOTAL: 347

If you have a suggestion(s) for strengthening our sense of community please list below.

GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

10. Concerning new residential and non-residential land uses, what level of development of would you generally prefer?

	Residential	Non Residential
No development	19% <input type="checkbox"/>	35% <input type="checkbox"/>
Very little development	46% <input type="checkbox"/>	40% <input type="checkbox"/>
Moderate development	34% <input type="checkbox"/>	21% <input type="checkbox"/>
Considerable development	2% <input type="checkbox"/>	3% <input type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL: 371 318

11. Please check the level of change that you would like to see for Egremont in the future in the following areas?

	None or very little change	Moderate change	TOTAL
greater variety in costs of housing	60% <input type="checkbox"/>	40% <input type="checkbox"/>	307
increased housing for senior citizens	53% <input type="checkbox"/>	47% <input type="checkbox"/>	306
increased housing for moderate income families	54% <input type="checkbox"/>	46% <input type="checkbox"/>	320
increased diversity of population	60% <input type="checkbox"/>	40% <input type="checkbox"/>	295
increased job opportunities	54% <input type="checkbox"/>	46% <input type="checkbox"/>	306
increased shopping opportunities	73% <input type="checkbox"/>	27% <input type="checkbox"/>	311

Comment:

12. At current real estate prices (\$238,000 average sale price for a home in 1998-99), some people with roots in town or working locally are finding it difficult to own a home in Egremont. Should the town seek to encourage, through new regulatory policies, a greater percentage of housing development to be affordable?

Yes ☐ 40% No ☐ 39% Unsure/No opinion ☐ 23%

TOTAL: 37

13. For future growth in Egremont, which policy would you prefer in terms of shaping the overall growth pattern? (check one)

- 36% ☐ Continue our present policy, allowing single acre lots everywhere
- 14% ☐ Allow more concentrated development in the villages with single acre lots elsewhere
- 50% ☐ Allow more concentrated development in the villages, somewhat less dense around the villages, and least dense development in more remote areas of town

TOTAL: 351

14. Assuming that some change and growth will take place, which of the following land uses would you be willing to see more of and where in Egremont:

Residential Uses	Anywhere in Town	Only in designated areas	Not at all	TOTAL
single family homes	67%	30%	3%	357
small apartment complexes	6%	37%	57%	355
condominiums	4%	28%	68%	348
seasonal/second homes	55%	31%	14%	337
nursing home/assisted living facility	7%	59%	34%	350
Non-Residential Uses				
small low impact retail businesses that serve local needs such as hair dresser/barber, video stores	17%	66%	17%	370
small retail businesses that serve residents and visitors such as restaurants, antique/craft/gift shops	26%	64%	9%	367
other retail businesses that serve local needs such as gas stations, convenience stores	12%	58%	30%	366
supermarket	6%	24%	71%	361
professional offices such as medical	18%	54%	28%	352
home occupation with on-site clients such as counselor	48%	33%	19%	349
home businesses with limited number of employees but no/few on-site customers such as software firm	40%	40%	20%	354
bed and breakfast inn	59%	33%	8%	360
hotel or motel	7%	37%	56%	357
resort	8%	38%	54%	359
campground	9%	60%	31%	356
athletic club	7%	48%	45%	354
medium/large performing arts center	9%	34%	56%	359
medium scale high tech industry	3%	27%	70%	365
traditional manufacturing/lumber mill	3%	30%	67%	362
other large facilities/stores	3%	12%	86%	367
windmills	26%	46%	28%	352
farms raising animals	44%	51%	5%	365
farms raising crops/orchards/nursery	52%	46%	2%	368
riding stables	31%	60%	9%	363

15. Would you support allowing the re-use of large existing structures, such as historic buildings/barns for similar scale residential and non-residential purposes, through a permitting process that would aim at minimizing negative impacts?

Yes 58% No 9% Unsure 50% No opinion 9%

TOTAL: 368

CONSERVATION & PRESERVATION

16. Would you like Egremont to preserve open space in new developments by permitting homes closer to each other in one portion of the development in exchange for permanently protected open space in another area of the development?

Yes 53% No 24% Unsure 21% No opinion 2%

TOTAL: 3

17. Should Egremont make efforts to protect or preserve the following?

	Yes	No	TOTAL
ponds and streams	98%	2%	384
wetlands	94%	6%	373
drinking water sources	99%	1%	384
mountaintops	85%	5%	376
scenic roads	97%	3%	374
scenic areas/ outstanding views	97%	3%	369
working farms	95%	5%	381
open space	95%	5%	372
historical sites	95%	5%	372
archaeological sites	84%	11%	362
other			

comments:

18. Would you consider giving the town, by town meeting vote, greater authority to:

	Yes	No	TOTAL
Regulate lot sizes according to land capabilities	70%	30%	331
Delineate separate zoning districts to locate new businesses only in designated areas	78%	22%	341
Preserve the historic character of the villages	90%	10%	341
Preserve open space and rural character outside the villages	87%	13%	341
Control parking and traffic	82%	18%	341
Regulate signs and billboards	91%	9%	351
Protect the environment, such as air and water quality	89%	11%	341
Limit building in higher mountain elevations	79%	21%	341
Limit building on steep slopes	82%	19%	341

19. Egremont has many roads that are scenic.
Below, check any scenic features you might generally
consider important to preserve.

86% ☒ stone walls 324
50% ☒ narrow travel lanes 188
40% ☒ narrow shoulders 150
86% ☒ limited roadside signs 322
81% ☒ wildflowers, vegetation close to road edge 306
90% ☒ tree-lined roads with moderate trimming 338
56% ☒ dirt or gravel surface 211

Total respondents checking at least one box: 376

20. Should preservation of the scenic character
of rural roads be a consideration in road
maintenance decisions?

Yes ☒ 83% No ☒ 6% Unsure ☒ 6% No opinion ☒ 5%

TOTAL: 382

21. To promote water quality, limited sewer systems
are sometimes installed, operated and maintained in
small towns through a variety of funding sources.
Please indicate if you would you support a limited
sewer system in the any of the following areas under
funding conditions listed.

	Yes, even if some local tax dollars required	Yes, but only if funded entirely thru user fees and/or grants	No	TOTAL
South Egremont Village	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 32%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 55%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 13%	334
North Egremont Village	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 26%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 58%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 16%	299
Prospect Lake	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 27%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 57%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 16%	300

22. Having a sewer system or allowing homes to
share septic systems could allow for greater growth
than is currently possible, given the present natural
constraints of building on some lots. Should growth
issues be considered if improved septic or sewer
systems are allowed?

Yes ☒ 45% No ☒ 36% Unsure ☒ 17% No opinion ☒ 2%

TOTAL: 370

HOUSEHOLD/EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Please answer the following additional information to
help us understand household and local employment.

23. Please indicate the number of people in your
household, including yourself, that fall in the age
categories below: Total people represented: 939

under 5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5%	35 to 44	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10%
5 to 13	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 8%	45 to 54	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 22%
14 to 17	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7%	55 to 64	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17%
18 to 24	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5%	65 to 74	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 13%
25 to 34	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6%	75 and over	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 8%

24. If you live in or within ¼ mile walking distance
of either Village, please check the appropriate
box.

South Egremont ☒ 67% North Egremont ☒ 33%

TOTAL: 132

25. If you live in Egremont, do you rent or own
your housing?

Rent ☒ 5% Own ☒ 95%

TOTAL: 385

26. Do you or a member of your household have a
home occupation/home based business in
Egremont?

Yes ☒ 24% No ☒ 76%

TOTAL: 379

27. Do you or a member of your household own a
business in Egremont, other than a home
business?

Yes ☒ 5% No ☒ 95%

TOTAL: 378

28. Do you or a member of your household work
for an employer in Egremont?

Yes ☒ 6% No ☒ 92%

TOTAL: 381

Do you have any additional comments related to the subject matter of this survey?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME.

Survey developed and compiled by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.

Egremont looking for residents' input in charting master plans

By Lisa Gosselin

Berkshire Eagle Staff

EGREMONT — The Egremont Master Plan Committee is looking for input from town residents in order to revise the town's master and open space plan for the first time in 12 years.

The town previously won an \$80,000 grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, in conjunction with Mount Washington. Egremont then hired the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to help the town update its master plan, said Committee Chairwoman Eileen Vining.

At the same time, the two towns can work to resolve common issues since they share many of the same scenic vistas and Egremont's watershed runs off Mount Washington. Vining explained, adding the road to Mount Washington runs through Egremont and Egremont's Fire Department serves Mount Wash-

ington.

More than 1,000 surveys have been sent to homeowners, renters and business owners in Egremont. "We have had a good response so far," Vining said.

The deadline has been extended to Feb. 1 for all surveys to be returned.

The questionnaires ask residents and business owners to identify what they value in town and their visions for the future. The survey asks about recreational preferences, current town services, and the degree and pattern of growth residents would like to see.

"This is a rare opportunity for people to voice their opinions thoughtfully and confidentially on a variety of present and future issues the town will be dealing with," Vining said.

"We've included a broad range of questions and are eager to hear from the townspeople about their vision for the town," she added.

Once the Berkshire Regional

Planning Commission compiles the survey results, a community forum will take place for people to have further input, likely in the early spring.

A revised master and open space plan will then be written and another community forum will be held, Vining said.

Once the Master Plan Committee agrees on a plan, bylaws will be written and a special town meeting will be called, she said, estimating it will be at least a year before the revised master plan is complete.

"We hope people will take the time to fill out the survey so we will have a good, broad-based response to use in developing these plans," said committee member Bill Gilbert.

Anyone who did not receive a survey, but wishes to participate should call Vining at 229-6623. Surveys are limited to one per household.

Appendix B: Results of the Community Forum

Saturday, April 8, 2000

The Egremont Community Forum was a great success! Over sixty enthusiastic participants gave up a sunny Saturday morning in April to express their views on what Egremont's future should hold. Those attending the forum were welcomed by a brief introduction to the master planning process from Eileen Vining, the Master Plan Steering Committee Chair, and Nat Karns, Executive Director of BRPC. As promised, Tom Skoglund, Senior Land Use Planner at BRPC, unveiled the results of the Community Survey. However, the majority of the workshop was occupied by breakout group discussions organized by Joel Russell of Woodlea Associates, who facilitated the workshop. Attendees broke into groups of 10-12 people to discuss the assets Egremont should retain, issues or problems the Town is facing, and actions the Town should take in the future. The groups then shared their conclusions with the entire workshop, with the last twenty minutes dedicated to a discussion of the most important points and follow-up steps to the workshop.

The breakout group discussions and the large-group discussion that followed produced very valuable information for the planning process. There was a great deal of agreement on the issues and challenges Egremont faces, and some general agreement that the Town should take action to address them.

Village Areas

One theme that emerged from the discussions was the importance of maintaining and enhancing the village areas, especially South Egremont Village, which has a mix of residential, community, and business uses. Many participants expressed concern over the apparent deterioration of certain historic buildings in South Egremont and believed the Town should make an effort to restore them. Suggestions for doing this included forming a Committee to explore historic preservation grants, having a more active Historical Commission, and encouraging businesses to locate in these buildings through a Development Committee or Chamber of Commerce. Having design standards for the villages was also discussed, as well as making the village more pedestrian-friendly with sidewalks. Participants were also concerned with heavy traffic on Route 23 through the village.

Land Use

There seemed to be general agreement on the types of land use that are appropriate for Egremont and where they should be located. There appeared to be consensus that the character and scale of the town should stay the same. Most people agreed that the only types of commercial uses appropriate for Egremont would be small-scale, low-impact businesses, and that these uses should occur mainly in South Egremont Village and possibly in North Egremont Village and certain areas along Route 23, although there was disagreement on the latter two. Some people felt that North Egremont Village would be more appropriate for residential uses than additional business. Participants seemed to agree that Egremont's open spaces, mountaintops, and rural/agricultural areas are very important to the Town's natural beauty and character, and that these areas should be protected from large-scale or disruptive development. Suggestions to accomplish this goal included changing the zoning in certain areas, enacting a Scenic Mountains

and/or ridgeline protection bylaw, using tax dollars to purchase the development rights of important parcels, and encouraging agricultural uses. Others suggested that open space be protected through the State or a land trust.

There seemed to be widespread consensus among workshop participants that the Town's current zoning bylaw did not allow for differences in use and density between the village areas and the more rural outlying areas, and should be changed to reflect these differences. The current zoning bylaw allows single-acre lots anywhere in Town, which could be detrimental to open areas, and requires a special permit for any change in non-residential use, which some noted makes it difficult for businesses to locate in South Egremont Village. Nearly every group expressed the desire for a change in zoning, although for the most part specific changes were not discussed.

Water Resources & Water Quality

Egremont's water resources were a topic of discussion in many groups, with attention given to water quality and recreational access to Prospect Lake. There was agreement that the current public access to Prospect Lake is inadequate and should be improved. Several groups also brought up septic system and sewer issues. While some agreed that a limited sewer system could protect water quality in some areas, particularly Prospect Lake, it was also recognized that a sewer system could make denser development possible. There seemed to be consensus on the undesirability of a townwide sewer system.

Affordable Housing

Several groups discussed the lack of affordable housing for first-time homebuyers, young people, and seniors. Many people expressed support for increased diversity in housing prices, with one suggested action being a more active Community Land Trust. Some participants said they would support an increase in affordable housing as long as it did not raise Egremont's tax rate, which is currently one of the lowest in Berkshire County.

Communication & Community

A number of second-home owners attended the forum, and part-time and full-time residents alike expressed a desire to have additional Master Plan meetings and Town Meetings on weekends, so that second-home owners could have a chance to offer their input. Several groups also expressed a desire to have more regional communication and cooperation on the issues raised in the forum.

Next Steps

Most of the final wrap-up discussion focused on what would happen next in the planning process. Participants were very enthusiastic about informing Egremont residents who did not attend the forum about what was discussed, as well as continuing discussion after the workshop, perhaps through a townwide mailing, website, and/or e-mail listserver. Many expressed interest in attending a second workshop in August. Those who had an interest in beginning immediate work on issues such as historic restoration, affordable housing, access to Prospect Lake, and trails in French Park circulated sign-up sheets.

Overall, the forum generated not only useful information, but also a lot of enthusiasm and support for the planning process.

Appendix C: State-Listed Species Recorded in Egremont

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	State Status
Animals				
<i>Ambystoma jeffersonianum</i>	Jefferson Salamander	G5	S3	SC
<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	Grasshopper Sparrow	G5	S2	T
<i>Cistothorus platensis</i>	Sedge Wren	G5	S1	E
<i>Clemmys guttata</i>	Spotted Turtle	G5	S3	SC
<i>Clemmys insculpta</i>	Wood Turtle	G4	S3	SC
<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Common Moorhen	G5	S1	SC
<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus</i>	Spring Salamander	G5	S3	SC
<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Indiana Bat	G2	SH	E
<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	Pied-billed Grebe	G5	S1	E
Plants				
<i>Acer nigrum</i>	Black Maple	G5Q	S3	SC
<i>Agrimonia pubescens</i>	Hairy Agrimony	G5	S2	T
<i>Aster prenanthoides</i>	Crooked-stem Aster	G4G5	S3	SC
<i>Blephilia hirsuta</i>	Hairy Wood-mint	G5	S1	E
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i> var. <i>palustris</i>	Fen Cuckoo Flower	G5T5	S2	T
<i>Carex formosa</i>	Handsome Sedge	G4	S1	T
<i>Carex sterilis</i>	Dioecious Sedge	G4	S2	T
<i>Carex tetanica</i>	Fen sedge	G4G5	S3	SC
<i>Chamaelirium luteum</i>	Devil's Bit	G5	S1	E
<i>Eleocharis intermedia</i>	Intermediate Spike-sedge	G5	S2	T
<i>Eriophorum gracile</i>	Slender Cottongrass	G5	S2	T
<i>Galium labradoricum</i>	Labrador Bedstraw	G5	S3	SC
<i>Panicum gattingeri</i>	Gattinger's Panic-grass	G4	S3	SC
<i>Pellaea atropurpurea</i>	Purple Cliff-Brake	G5	S4	WL
<i>Platanthera dilatata</i>	Leafy White Orchis	G5	S2	T
<i>Poa languida</i>	Drooping Speargrass	G3G4Q	S1	E
<i>Potamogeton hillii</i>	Hill's Pondweed	G3G4Q	S3	SC
<i>Ranunculus longirostris</i>	Long-beaked Water Crowfoot	G5	S4	WL
<i>Rhynchospora capillacea</i>	Capillary Beak-sedge	G5	S1	E
<i>Salix candida</i>	Hoary Willow	G5	S?	WL
<i>Salix serissima</i>	Autumn Willow	G4	S3	WL
<i>Scirpus pendulus</i>	Pendulous Bulrush	G5	S3	WL
<i>Sphenopholis nitida</i>	Shining Wedgegrass	G5	S2	T
<i>Spiranthes romanzoffiana</i>	Hooded Ladies-tresses	G5	S1	E
<i>Verbena simplex</i>	Narrow-leaved Vervain	G5	S1	E
<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	Culver's-Root	G5	S3	SC

Source: Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

Key to DFW Rank:

E = Endangered: in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portions of its range, and species in danger of extirpation as documented by biological research and inventory.

T = Threatened: likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range, and any species declining or rare as determined by biological research and inventory and likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future.

SC = Special Concern: has been documented by biological research and inventory to have suffered a decline that could threaten the species if allowed to continue unchecked or that occurs in such small numbers or with such a restricted distribution or specialized habitat requirements that it could easily become threatened within Massachusetts.

WL = Unofficial Watch List.

Key to Global Rank:

GX = Extinct: not located despite intensive searches.

G1 = Critically imperiled: typically five or fewer occurrences or 1,000 or fewer individuals.

G2 = Imperiled: typically six to 20 occurrences or 1,000-3,000 individuals

G3 = Vulnerable: rare; typically 21-100 occurrences or 3,000-10,000 individuals.

G4 = Apparently Secure: uncommon but not rare globally; some cause for long-term concern; usually more than 100 occurrences or 10,000 individuals.

G5 = Secure; common; widespread and abundant.

Appendix D: Partial List of Plants in the Karner Brook Watershed

Source: *The Karner Brook Watershed: A Proposal for Nomination as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991. List compiled by P. Weatherbee and B.A. Sorrie.

Trees

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Betula papyrifera</i>	Paper Birch
<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	Ironwood
<i>Carya cordifolia</i>	Bitternut Hickory
<i>C. Ovata</i>	Shagbark Hickory
<i>Corylus cornuta</i>	Beaked Hazelnut
<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	American Beech
<i>Fraxinus americana</i>	White Ash
<i>F. nigra</i>	Black Ash
<i>Juglans cinerea</i>	Butternut
<i>Larix laricina</i>	Tamarack

<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip Tree
<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	Hop Hornbeam
<i>Pinus strobus</i>	White Pine
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Quaking Aspen
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black Cherry
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Red Oak
<i>Salix nigra</i>	Black Willow
<i>Tilia americana</i>	Basswood
<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>	Hemlock
<i>Ulmus americana</i>	American Elm

Shrubs

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Alnus rugosa</i>	Speckled Alder
<i>A. serrulata</i>	Smooth Alder
<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>	Chokeberry
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	Barberry
<i>B. vulgaris</i>	
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	Buttonbush
<i>Cornus amomum</i>	Silky Dogwood
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Red-osier Dogwood
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Witch Hazel
<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Winterberry
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Juniper
<i>J. virginiana</i>	
<i>Kalmia angustifolia</i>	Sheep Laurel
<i>K. latifolia</i>	Mountain Laurel
<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	Spice bush
<i>Lonicera morrowii</i>	Honeysuckle
<i>Lyonia ligustrina</i>	Maleberry
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Chokecherry
<i>Rosa caroliniana</i>	Pasture Rose
<i>R. multiflora</i>	Multiflora Rose
<i>R. palustris</i>	Swamp Rose
<i>Salix bebbiana</i>	Willow
<i>S. candida</i>	Hoary Willow
<i>S. discolor</i>	Pussy Willow
<i>S. eriocephala</i>	

<i>S. lucida</i>	Shining Willow
<i>S. sericea</i>	Silky Willow
<i>S. serissima</i>	Autumn Willow
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	Elderberry
<i>Spiraea latifolia</i>	Spiraea
<i>S. tomentosa</i>	
<i>Taxus canadensis</i>	American yew
<i>Toxicodendron vernix</i>	Poison sumac
<i>Vaccinium angustifolia</i>	Blueberry
<i>V. corymbosum</i>	Highbush blueberry
<i>V. vacillans</i>	
<i>Viburnum cassinoides</i>	Wild Raisin
<i>V. acerifolium</i>	Mapleleaf Viburnum
<i>V. recognitum</i>	Arrowwood
<i>Vitus spp.</i>	Grapevine
<i>Zanthoxylum americanum</i>	Prickly Ash

Herbaceous Plants

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Acorus Americanus</i>	Sweet Flag
<i>Aralia nudicaulis</i>	Wild Sarsparilla
<i>Arisaema Triphyllum</i>	Jack-In-The-Pulpit
<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	Swamp Milkweed
<i>Aster acuminatus</i>	Sharp-leaved Wood Aster
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i> var. <i>palustris</i>	Fen Cuckoo Flower
<i>Chamaelirium luteum</i>	Devil's Bit Lily
<i>Circaea quadrisulcata</i>	Enchanters Nightshade
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Queen Anne's Lace
<i>Drosera rotundifolia</i>	Round-leaved sundew
<i>Epilobium leptophyllum</i>	Willow Herb
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	Helleborine
<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	Boneset
<i>E. purpureum</i> ,	Joe Pye Weed
<i>E. maculatum</i>	
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Strawberry
<i>Galium labradoricum</i>	Labrador Bedstraw
<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	Wild Geranium
<i>Geum rivale</i>	Purple Avens
<i>Hepatica americana</i> <i>acutiloba</i>	Hepaticas
<i>Hieracium venosum</i>	Rattlesnake Weed
<i>Houstonia caerulea</i>	Bluets
<i>Impatiens capensis</i> , <i>pallida</i>	Jewelweeds
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow Iris
<i>I. versicolor</i>	Blue Flag
<i>Lobelia inflata</i>	Indian Tobacco
<i>L. kalmii</i>	Brook Lobelia
<i>Lysimachia terrestris</i>	Swamp Candles
<i>L. thyriflora</i>	Swamp Loostrife
<i>Mainanthemum canadensis</i>	Canada Mayflower
<i>Medeola virginiana</i>	Indian Cucumber-root
<i>Menyanthes trifoliana</i>	Buckbean
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild Bergamot
<i>Parnassia glauca</i>	Grass of Parnassus
<i>Peltandra virginica</i>	Arrow Arum
<i>Penstemon sp.</i>	Penstemon Digitalis
<i>Pogonia ophioglossoides</i>	Rose Pogonia
<i>Polygala paucifolia</i>	Fringed Polygala
<i>Ranunculus longirostris</i>	White Water-crowfoot
<i>Rubus alleghaniensis</i>	Blackberry
<i>R. hispidus</i>	Dewberry
<i>R. ideaus</i>	Red Raspberry
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-Eyed Susan
<i>Sanicula marilandica</i>	Snakeroot

<i>Scutellaria galericulata</i>	Swamp Skullcap
<i>Senecio aurea</i>	Ragwort
<i>Smilacina racemosa</i>	False Solomon's Seal
<i>Smilacina stellata</i>	Starry False Solomon's Seal
<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	Nightshade
<i>Solidago purshii</i>	Goldenrods
<i>Symplocarpus foetidus</i>	Skunk cabbage
<i>Taraxacum officinalis</i>	Dandelion
<i>Thymus serpyllum</i>	Thyme
<i>Trientalis borealis</i>	Starflower
<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Coltsfoot
<i>Uvularia perfoliata</i>	Bellwort
<i>U. sessilifolia</i>	Fen Cuckoo Flower
<i>Veratrum viride</i>	Indian Poke
<i>Verbascum blattarias</i>	Mullein
<i>V. thapsus</i>	
<i>Verbena hastata</i>	Blue Verain
<i>Viola triloba</i>	Violets
<i>var dilatata, cucullata</i>	

Clubmosses and Horsetails

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Carex aquatilis</i>	
<i>C. aurea</i>	
<i>C. comosa</i>	
<i>C. cryptolepis</i>	
<i>C. diandra</i>	
<i>C. flava</i>	
<i>C. granularis</i>	
<i>C. hystrix</i>	
<i>C. lacustris</i>	
<i>C. lasiocarpa</i>	
<i>C. leptalea</i>	
<i>C. lurida</i>	
<i>C. pallescens</i>	

<i>C. prairea</i>	
<i>C. rostrata</i>	
<i>C. sterilis</i>	
<i>C. stricta</i>	
<i>C. tetanica</i>	
<i>C. viridula</i>	
<i>C. vulpinoidea</i>	
<i>Cyperus strigosus</i>	
<i>Elocharis erythropoda</i>	
<i>Eriophorum alpinum</i>	Cotton Grass
<i>E. gracile</i>	
<i>E. viridicarinatum</i>	
<i>Rhynchospora capillacea</i>	Beakrush
<i>Scirpus pendulus</i>	Bullrush
<i>S. tabernaemontani</i>	

Ferns

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Camptosorus rhizophyllum</i>	Walking Fern
<i>Cystopteris bulbifera</i>	Bulblet Fern
<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	Sensitive Fern
<i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	Cinnamon Fern
<i>O. claytoniana</i>	Interrupted Fern
<i>O. regalis</i>	Royal Fern
<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	Christmas Fern
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken Fern
<i>Thelypteris palustris</i>	Marsh Fern

Pondweeds

Scientific Name
<i>Potamogeton foliosus</i>
<i>P. gramineus</i>
<i>P. hillebrandii</i>
<i>P. natans</i>
<i>P. nodosus</i>
<i>P. pectinatus</i>
<i>P. zosteriformis</i>

Appendix E: Mammals of Berkshire County

Source: James E. Cardoza, Wildlife Biologist, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife,
"State Mammal List" www.state.ma.us/dfwele/dfw/dfwmam.html.

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Alces alces</i>	Moose
<i>Blarina brevicauda</i>	Northern Short-Tailed Shrew
<i>Canis latrans</i>	Coyote
<i>Castor canadensis</i>	American Beaver
<i>Clethrionomys gapperi</i>	Southern Red-backed Vole
<i>Condylura cristata</i>	Star-nosed Mole
<i>Didelphis virginiana</i>	Virginia Opossum
<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	Big Brown Bat
<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>	Common porcupine
<i>Glaucomys sabrinus</i>	Northern Flying Squirrel
<i>Glaucomys volans</i>	Southern Flying Squirrel
<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>	Silver-haired Bat
<i>Lasiurus borealis</i>	Eastern Red Bat
<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>	Hoary Bat
<i>Lepus americanus</i>	Snowshoe Hare
<i>Lontra canadensis</i>	Northern River Otter
<i>Lynx rufus</i>	Bobcat
<i>Marmota monax</i>	Woodchuck
<i>Martes pennanti</i>	Fisher
<i>Mephitis mephitis</i>	Striped skunk
<i>Microtus pennsylvanicus</i>	Meadow Vole
<i>Microtus pinetorum</i>	Woodland Vole
<i>Mus musculus</i>	House Mouse
<i>Mustela erminea</i>	Ermine
<i>Mustela frenata</i>	Long-Tailed Weasel
<i>Mustela vison</i>	American Mink
<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	Little Brown Bat
<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Indiana Bat
<i>Napaeozapus insignis</i>	Woodland Jumping Mouse
<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	White-tailed deer
<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>	Common Muskrat
<i>Parascalops breweri</i>	Hairy-tailed Mole
<i>Peromyscus leucopus</i>	White-footed Mouse
<i>Peromyscus maniculatus</i>	Deer Mouse
<i>Pipistrellus subflavus</i>	Eastern Pipistrelle
<i>Procyon lotor</i>	Common Raccoon
<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	Norway Rat
<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>	Eastern Gray Squirrel
<i>Sorex cinereus</i>	Masked Shrew
<i>Sorex dispar</i>	Rock (Long-Tailed) Shrew
<i>Sorex fumeus</i>	Smoky Shrew
<i>Sorex hoyi</i>	Pygmy Shrew
<i>Sorex palustris</i>	Common Water Shrew
<i>Sylvilagus floridanus</i>	Eastern cottontail

<i>Synaptomys cooperi</i>	Southern Bog Lemming
<i>Tamias striatus</i>	Eastern Chipmunk
<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>	Red Squirrel
<i>Urocyon cinereoargenteus</i>	Common Gray Fox
<i>Ursus americanus</i>	Black Bear
<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	Red Fox
<i>Zapus hudsonius</i>	Meadow Jumping Mouse

Appendix F: Birds of Berkshire County

Source: *The Karner Brook Watershed: Proposal for Nomination as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991. The Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield, Timothy Flanagan, Curator of Natural Science.

Common Name
Alder Flycatcher
American Bittern
American Black Duck
American Coot
American Crow
American Kestrel (Sparrow Hawk)
American Robin
American Wigeon (Baldpate)
American Woodcock
Bald Eagle
Bank Swallow
Barn Swallow
Barred owl
Belted Kingfisher
Black-billed Cuckoo
Black-capped Chickadee
Blue Jay
Blue-grey Gnatcatcher
Blue-winged Teal
Broad-winged Hawk
Brown Creeper
Brown Thrasher
Bufflehead
Carolina Wren
Cattle Egret
Chimney Swift
Cliff Swallow
Common Golden-eye
Common Nighthawk
Common Moorhen (Common Gallinule)
Common Raven
Common Snipe
Cooper's Hawk
Downy Woodpecker
Eastern Bluebird
Eastern Kingbird
Eastern Phoebe
Eastern Screech owl
Eastern Wood Pewee
Golden Eagle
Golden-crowned Kinglet
Grasshopper Sparrow
Gray Catbird
Gray-cheeked Thrush
Great Blue Heron

Great Crested Flycatcher
Great Egret (Common Egret)
Great Horned owl
Greater Yellow-legs
Green-back Heron
Green-winged Teal
Hairy Woodpecker
Hermit Thrush
Herring Gull
Hooded Merganser
Horned Lark
House Wren
Killdeer
King Rail
Least Bittern
Least Flycatcher
Lesser Yellow-legs
Little Blue Heron
Mallard
Marsh Wren
Merlin (Pigeon Hawk)
Mourning Dove
Northern Flicker
Northern Goshawk
Northern Harrier (Marsh Hawk)
Northern Mockingbird
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Northern Saw-Whet owl
Olive-sided Flycatcher
Osprey
Peregrine Falcon (Duck Hawk)
Pied-billed Grebe
Pileated Woodpecker
Prairie Horned Lark (subspecies)
Red-bellied Sapsucker
Red-breasted Nuthatch
Red-headed Woodpecker
Red-shouldered Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Ring-billed Gull
Ring-necked Duck
Ring-necked Pheasant
Rock Dove
Rough-legged Hawk
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Ruddy Duck
Ruffed Grouse
Sedge Wren (Short-billed Marsh

Wren)
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Snow Goose
Snowy Egret
Snowy owl
Solitary Sandpiper
Sora
Spotted Sandpiper
Swainson's Thrush (Olive-backed Thrush)
Three-toed Woodpecker (Northern Three-toes)
Tree Swallow
Tufted Titmouse
Turkey Vulture
Veery
Virginia Rail
Whip-poor-will
White-breasted Nuthatch
Wild Turkey
Winter Wren
Wood Duck
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Appendix G: Amphibians and Reptiles of the Karner Brook Watershed

Source: *The Karner Brook Watershed: Proposal for Nomination as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991. List compiled by Dr. Michael W. Klemens, Herpetologist, American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY.

Scientific Name	Common Name
<u>Salamanders</u>	
<i>Ambystoma jeffersonianum</i>	Jefferson Salamander
<i>Ambystoma laterale</i>	Blue-spotted Salamander
<i>Ambystoma maculatum</i>	Spotted Salamander
<i>Desmognathus f. fuscus</i>	Northern Dusky Salamander
<i>Eurycea bislineata</i>	Northern Two-lined Salamander
<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus</i>	p. Northern Spring Salamander
<i>Hernidactylum scutatum</i> *	Four-toed Salamander
<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>	Redback Salamander
<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>	v. Red-spotted Newt
<u>Frogs</u>	
<i>Bufo a. americanus</i>	Eastern American Toad
<i>Hyla versicolor</i>	Gray Treefrog
<i>Pseudacns c. crucifer</i>	Northern Spring Peeper
<i>Rana catesbeiana</i>	Bullfrog
<i>Rana clamitans melanota</i>	Green Frog
<i>Rana palustris</i>	Pickerel Frog
<i>Rana pipiens</i> *	Northern Leopard Frog
<i>Rana sylvatica</i>	Wood Frog
<u>Turtles</u>	
<i>Chelydra s. serpentina</i>	Common Snapping Turtle
<i>Chrysemys picta</i>	Painted Turtle
<i>Clemmys guttata</i>	Spotted Turtle
<i>Clemmys insculpta</i>	Wood Turtle
<i>Sternotherus odoratus</i>	Common Musk Turtle
<u>Snakes</u>	
<i>Coluber c. constrictor</i> *	Northern Black Racer
<i>Diadophis edwardsii</i> <i>punaatus</i>	Northern Ringneck Snake
<i>Heterodon platirhinos</i> *	Eastern Hognose Snake
<i>Lampropeltis t. triangulum</i>	Eastern Milk Snake
<i>Neprodia s. sipedon</i>	Northern Water Snake
<i>Opheodrys vernalis</i>	Smooth Green Snake

<i>Storeria d. dekayi</i> *	Northern Brown Snake
<i>Storeria o. occipitomaculata</i>	Northern Redbelly Snake
<i>Thamnophis s. sauritus</i> *	Eastern Ribbon Snake
<i>Thamnophis s. sirtalis</i>	Eastern Garter Snake

* = Potentially present but not necessarily documented

Appendix H: Fish Species of the Karner Brook Watershed

Source: *The Karner Brook Watershed: Proposal for Nomination as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, 1991. List compiled by Robert E. Schmidt, Berkshire Environmental Research Center, Simon's Rock College of Bard

Scientific Name	Common Name
<u>Cyprinidae - Minnow Family</u>	
<i>Luxilus cornutus</i>	Common shiner
<i>Notemigonus crysoleucas</i>	Golden shiner
<i>Rhinichthys atratulus</i>	Blacknose dace
<i>Rhinichthys cataractae</i>	Longnose dace
<i>Sentotilus atromaculatus</i>	Creek chub
<i>Semotilus corporalis</i>	Fallfish
<u>Catostomidae - Sucker family</u>	
<i>Catostomus commersoni</i>	White sucker
<u>Ictaluridae - Catfish family</u>	
<i>Ictalurus nebulosus</i>	Brown bullhead
<u>Salmonidae - Trout family</u>	
<i>Salmo trutta</i>	Brown trout (reproducing)
<i>Salvalinus fontinalis</i>	Brook trout (reproducing)
<u>Esocidae - Pike family</u>	
<i>Esox niger</i>	Chain pickerel
<u>Centrarchidae - Sunfish family</u>	
<i>Lepomis gibbosa</i>	Pumpkinseed
<i>Lepomis macrochira</i>	Bluegill
<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>	Largemouth bass
<u>Percidae - Perch family</u>	
<i>Perca flavescens</i>	Yellow perch
<u>Cottidae - Sculpin family</u>	
<i>Cottus cognatus</i>	Slimy sculpin

Appendix I: Inventory System for Roads with Scenic Features

(See Table NR1 Scenic Roads)

Opportunities for viewing the scenic areas in Egremont can be found along most of the roads that wind through this community. In order to assess the relative quality of the scenic features of these roads, BRPC adapted a method used by the Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway Study, which was based on a study by Frederic O. Sargent of the Vermont Resources Research Center. Our method used four categories to assess the scenic qualities of a particular section of road: variety, field of view, depth of view, and diminishing factors. A "section of road" was determined to be any length of road that had consistent attributes and scenic qualities. Definitions of the rating categories are as follows:

Variety

One of the factors that makes a view interesting or exciting is the number of different landscape elements that one can observe from a given point. To quantify the variety of features along a given set of road, we made a list of region-specific features one could expect to find in Mount Washington. Examples of landscape features include historic buildings, brilliant fall foliage, and views of nearby mountains and mountain ranges. Each time one of the items on the list was observed, a point was added to the variety column. These points were then translated into a score of High, Medium, or Low for each section of road. A section with seven or more features would receive a High rating, sections with 4-6 features would receive a Medium rating, and sections with 0-3 features would receive a rating of Low. A list of scenic features might include:

Water

Lake, Pond, Marsh, or Wetland

River or Brook

Waterfall

Landform Features

Cliff, Boulder, or Rock Outcrop

Hill or Mountain

Multiple Mountains or Range (score 2)

Effects

Ephemeral Effect (sunset, mist, reflection)

Seasonal Effect (Ice formations, brilliant foliage)

Vegetation

City or Town Park

Agricultural Pattern

Field & Forest Edge

Woodland or Tree Pattern (Species Mix, Hedgerow)

Mass of Wildflowers or Ferns

Other (Heritage tree, leaf tunnel effect)

Structures

Picturesque Farmstead

Unusual Building

Historic Structure or Archeological Site

Covered or Other Bridge

Stone Wall or Wooden Fence

Cemetery

Distant Village or Village Edge

Wildlife/Animals

Grazing animals

Wildlife sighting

Field of View

The field of view is a measure of the degree of horizon not obstructed from view by something at the immediate roadside. The presumption is that a view is more interesting if there is more to see. Field of view is the measure of the width of the scene visible to the observer.⁶⁸ We rated sections of road on a scale of High, Medium, and Low. A section would receive a High rating if the view was not significantly compromised, with views on both sides of the road. A section with a Medium rating might have views on one side of the road, but have the view on the other side blocked by trees or another obstruction. A road would receive a Low rating if the view was mainly obstructed, for example, a road corridor with mature forest on both sides.

Depth of View

The depth of view is a measure of the perception of distance from the location of the viewer to the farthest viewable element on the horizon. Where field of view is a measure of width, depth of view is a measure of depth. Because it is difficult to gauge exact distances accurately, we determined the perceived distance of mountain peaks by observing the amount of detail we were able to see from a given point. For instance, a Low rating was given to views of a single foothill where individual trees could be seen. A Medium rating was given to distances where a single peak was visible in one shade of gray. Where multiple shades of gray were visible on successive peaks a High rating was given, indicating the farthest distance.⁶⁹

Diminishing Factors

Diminishing factors, which are any aspects that reduce the quality of the view, were measured in much the same way as Variety, with one point recorded for each factor observed. These points were then translated into ratings of High, Medium, and Low, with three or more factors denoting a High rating, 1-2 factors receiving a Medium rating, and 0 factors receiving a Low rating. However, with regard to diminishing factors, a rating of High counts *against* the overall rating of a section of road, rather than being added to it, as with the previous categories. Diminishing factors may include:

⁶⁸ *Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway Study: Landscape Inventory and Assessment, February 1994, p.3.*

⁶⁹ *Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway Study: Landscape Inventory and Assessment, February 1994, p. 4.*

Obtrusive lumbering scar

Erosion

Mining

Utility line

Strip development

Incompatible building (style)

Dilapidated structure

Large parking lot

Junkyard or garbage

Gas station

Obtrusive signage

Stark drainage system

Polluted water

After giving each section a rating in each of these four categories, we synthesized the ratings into a Preliminary Overall Rating for each section. Those sections of road with the greatest number of High ratings for Variety, Field of View, and Depth of View, and the lowest ratings for Diminishing Factors, were judged as having Very High scenic value. The next group of roads, with mainly Medium scores, was given a High preliminary overall rating. Roads that had low scores in the Field of View and Depth of View categories, but had medium Variety were considered Significant, in terms of scenic value. Finally, those roads with the lowest ratings were given a preliminary rating of Less Significant.

After making these observations, the Advisory Committee re-examined each section of road to assess the scenic value of that section to the community. This was to ensure that scenic roads that might not rate highly according to an objective system, but which have value to the community, would still be recognized as significant. This re-assessment allowed the Committee to create a final Overall Rating for each section of road.

Appendix J: The Scenic Mountain Act



COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT A MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE

DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL,
NATURAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IN MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITIES.

Volume XI

December, 1974

Number 4

LANDMARK LEGISLATION — The Scenic Mountains Act

Warren E. Archey*

INTRODUCTION

The environmental protection of mountain regions, a long-overlooked part of the effort to preserve sensitive natural areas, is beginning to get the attention it deserves from the nation's lawmakers.

A milestone in this endeavor is Massachusetts' Berkshire Scenic Mountains Act of 1974. Going beyond land-use controls for mountains enacted by Palo Alto, California and Salt Lake City, Utah, the Massachusetts law is the first state legislation which takes into consideration the entire spectrum of interests served by regulating development in mountainous areas.

The act is directed toward several purposes, including the prevention of pollution and erosion and the preservation of natural scenic qualities. Specifically, the act, which was signed by Governor Francis Sargent on August 14, 1974, enables towns and cities in Berkshire County to designate mountain regions and adopt regulations for those regions in order to "protect watershed resources and preserve the scenic qualities of the environment."

Berkshire County legislators filed the original bill and, in its final form, it received their unanimous support. The law leaves to local governments the critical decision-making power. For instance, in deciding which areas to designate as protected mountain regions, they may take into consideration soil characteristics, elevation and slope.

The mountains affected by the legislation, the Berkshires, were created by natural forces 350 to 400 million years ago. Glaciation, occurring 10,000 to 12,000 years ago, gave them their contemporary shape. Man is new on the scene, geologically speaking, and even newer is his appreciation of mountain resources. This farsighted legislation, with percep-

tive and diligent implementation by local communities, can preserve this fragile landscape for future generations.

Chapter 842
THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Four
AN ACT REGULATING CERTAIN ACTIVITIES IN
MOUNTAIN REGIONS OF BERKSHIRE COUNTY.

Whereas, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose which is to provide a means for the protection of mountain regions of Berkshire County, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN GENERAL COURT ASSEMBLED, AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE SAME, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 131 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 97 the following section:

Section 97A. A city or town in the county of Berkshire which accepts the provisions of this section may designate its conservation commission or, if having none, the board of selectmen in action of the mayor in a city, to carry out the provisions of this section. The designated agency shall adopt regulations and rules and regulations relative to the mountain regions within the territorial limits of such city or town to protect watershed resources and preserve the natural scenic qualities of the environment.

SECTION 5. This act shall have effect upon its passage.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AUG 2, 1974

Bill passed to be enacted

W. R. Sullivan Speaker

Bill passed to be enacted

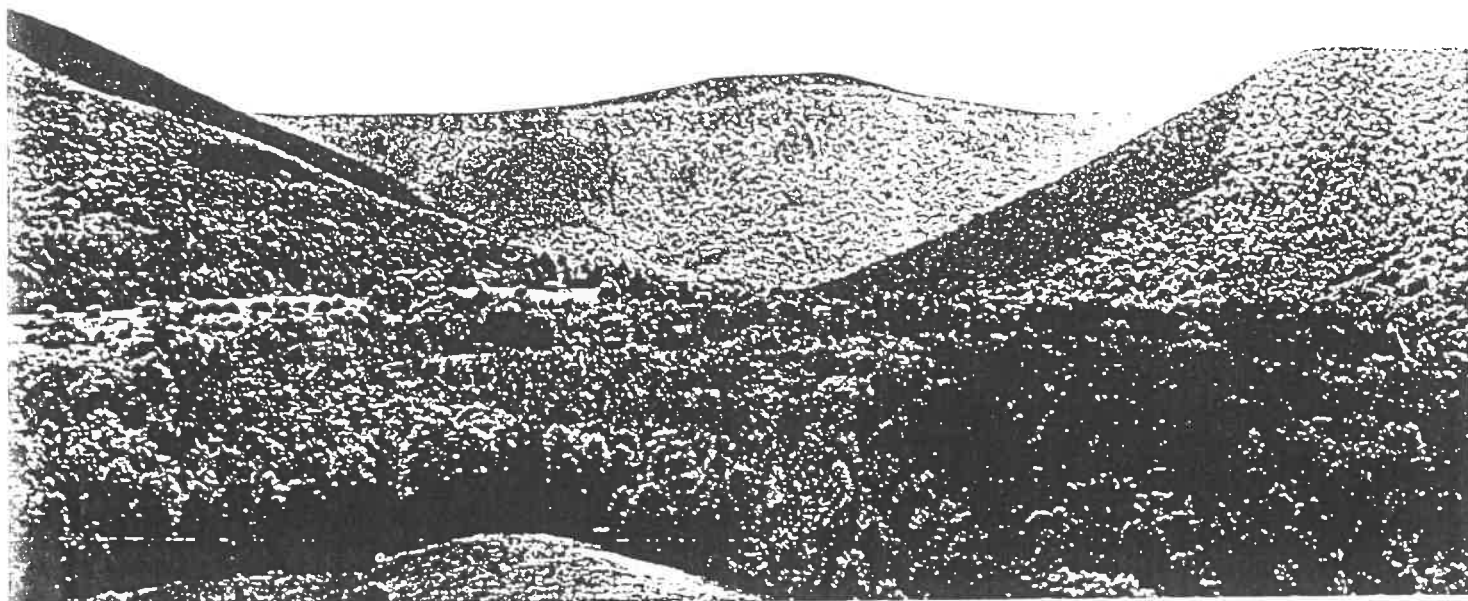
R. S. Wright President

August 14, 1974

Approved and 26 minutes, PM

Francis Sargent Governor

*Regional Community Resource Development Specialist
Berkshire County Extension Service
Pittsfield, Massachusetts



William H. Tague, *Berkshire Eagle*, Pittsfield, Massachusetts

THE ACT

This act, while restricted now to Berkshire County, has statewide, indeed national, implications for the future.

The law's origin goes back to late 1973 when the Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC) hired an attorney, Natalie West, to draft legislation designed to protect Berkshire mountain regions. The executive director of the BNRC, George S. Wislocki, underscored the urgency of his undertaking at that time: "Mountain regions are critical to the overall fabric of life in this county. Wherever you look, there are mountains. But unless measures are taken, they will be exploited, particularly by second-home development."

Very simply, the act enables Berkshire County cities and towns to delineate their own mountain regions and then exercise control over their development. Development within these regions must be reviewed by a town's conservation commission at a public hearing. The commission can then place conditions on development in line with the wording of the law, to "... protect watershed resources and preserve the scenic qualities of the mountain regions."

Essential to the process of drafting legislation was an open meeting in early 1974 designed to measure public response to the provisions of the act. This meeting, co-sponsored by the BNRC and the Cooperative Extension Service, and held in Pittsfield, led to the redrafting of the legislation. In the words of Mr. Wislocki, the meeting "... was an exemplary exercise in participatory planning." More than 120 persons, many of them representatives of Berkshire County conservation commissions, were especially eager to see how the act could affect their individual towns.

The BNRC engineers, Robert G. Brown and Associates of Lee, Massachusetts, provided a map which showed those areas likely to be affected by the law. Since the act was designed to protect mountaintops, the rationale used was to determine the average elevation of towns within the six watersheds in the county, then to determine the "base elevation" above mean sea level for each of the watersheds.

These were as follows:

Farmington River Watershed	—	1500 feet
Housatonic	" "	— 1500 feet
Westfield	" "	— 1600 feet
Deerfield	" "	— 1700 feet
Hudson	" "	— 1700 feet
Hoosic	" "	— 1800 feet

A map depicting mountain regions based on the base elevations criteria is shown in Figure 1.

In many towns these base elevations were felt to be realistic by those attending the meeting, but in others, especially those in the eastern plateau area of the county, a literal application of the base elevations was found to encompass a very large percentage of the town's area. The act, by design, accommodates this problem by allowing a town flexibility in determining mountain region boundaries. The act states, "If the hearing authority (generally the conservation commission) determines that the regulations of certain areas which have elevations lower than the base elevation is necessary to accomplish the purposes of this section, the hearing authority may include those areas in the proposed mountain regions. If the hearing authority finds that regulation of certain areas above the base elevation would not accomplish the purposes of this section, the hearing authority may exempt those areas from the proposed mountain regions."

The base elevation provision in the act was the source of most of the contention at the meeting. This provision was changed to defuse the contention, but the base elevations are still retained in the act to give towns a framework reference or a starting point upon which to make refinements.

In April, 1974, the Joint Legislative Committee on Natural Resources and Agriculture held a hearing on the scenic mountains legislation. Mr. Frederick G. Crane, Jr., chairman of the BNRC and a member of the Commonwealth's Board of Natural Resources, made a persuasive case in support of

the bill. The following are excerpts from his statement, which stressed the need for protection of the mountains and outlined major provisions of the act:

"Let me begin by quoting a recent editorial from a Berkshire newspaper:

"The Scenic Mountain Act for Berkshire County is a concept that probably should have been conceived years ago. In recent years we have witnessed the ruin of our lakes by enthusiastic, greedy speculators. There is no reason why we should sit back and watch our mountain tops meet with a similar fate. (Editorial from *The Berkshire Courier*, January 10, 1974)

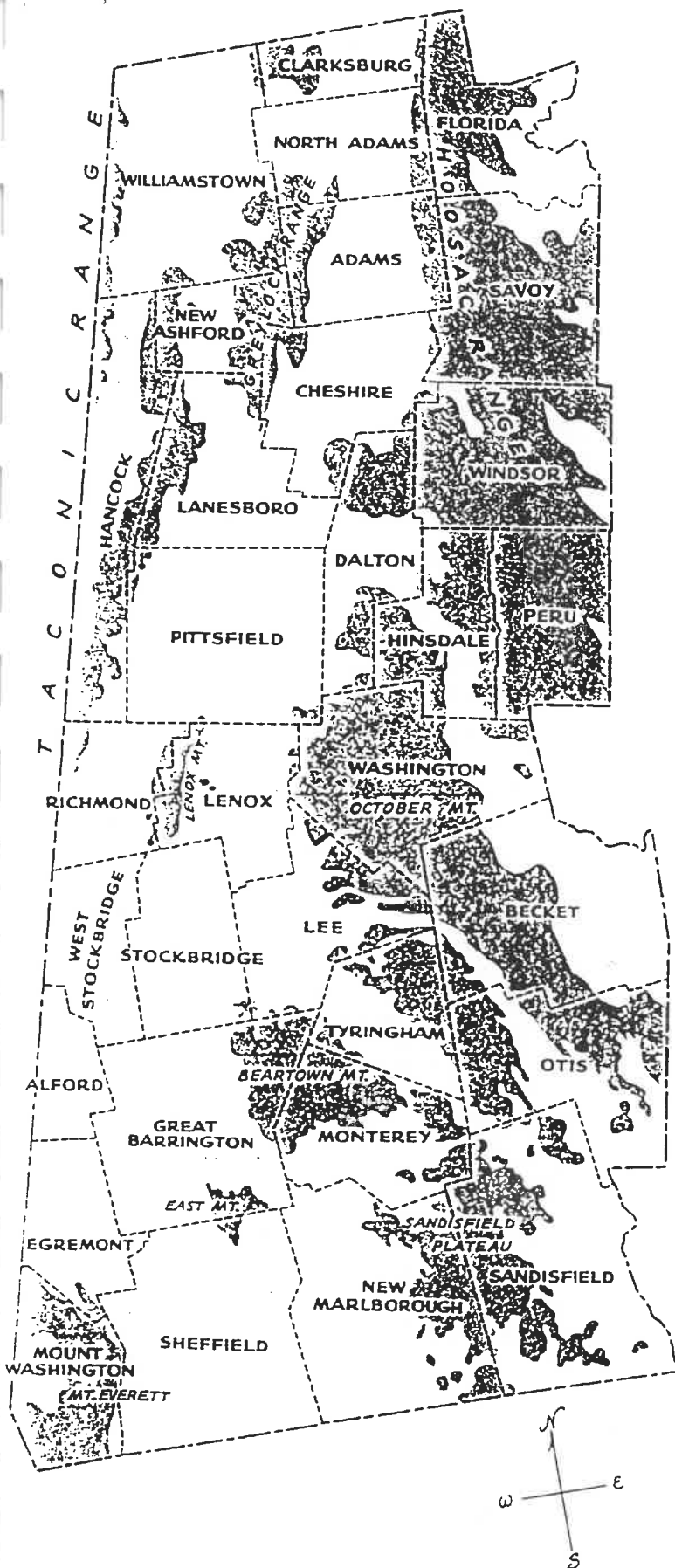
"In past years, most of the development in Berkshire County has taken place along the valley floors. Mountains have been inaccessible. Rocky soils and steep slopes make it difficult to build or grow anything in mountain regions. However, in recent years advances in building techniques have made it possible to perch a home high on a mountain slope, giving the homeowner a sweeping view of the valleys below. As lakeshore frontage is consumed by residential development, demand for second home sites will focus on highland areas. Industrial and residential expansion in the valleys is not possible without additional power, and the shortest path between two points often takes a utility powerline over a mountain. Radio towers and other communications apparatus threaten to clutter the Berkshire skyline.

"Activities which disturb the natural characteristics of mountainsides and mountaintops irreversibly change these environmentally sensitive areas. Excavation, construction, clearing and fill are visible for many miles. Destruction of the natural ground cover can result in severe erosion. Alteration of mountainsides increases the possibility of uncontrolled runoff. Steep, rocky slopes impede adequate sewage disposal. Aquifer recharge areas are usually located at elevations higher than the valley floors, and can be polluted by mountainside development.

"At present, most of the Berkshire mountainsides and mountaintops remain unspoiled and it's easy to enjoy our natural surroundings without considering the need to protect them. However, preserving the natural scenic qualities of the mountains requires careful evaluation of activities which would alter those regions. That old aphorism that cautions against putting off until tomorrow what you can do today has particular significance for the Berkshires: If we don't act to preserve our mountaintops today, we won't be able to act tomorrow. The scenic mountains bill provides a framework for immediate action to preserve the mountains of Berkshire County.

"The Berkshire Scenic Mountains Act would be a regulatory act, not a restrictive or confiscatory act. It would be an enabling act which allows each town in Berkshire County to choose whether or not that town wishes to protect its scenic mountains. Once a town has chosen to adopt the act, the conservation commission could impose conditions on any activity which would alter mountain regions of the municipality. If there is no conservation commission in the city or town, the mayor or board of selectmen would carry out the act.

"The conservation commission would identify important mountain regions in the community. Generally, any land which has an elevation higher than the 'base elevation'



PROPOSED SCENIC MOUNTAIN REGIONS OF BERKSHIRE COUNTY

Figure 1

0 5 10 MILES

would be considered a mountain region. The base elevation is the mean elevation of the watershed within which the activity is proposed, so the bill would protect approximately the top half of the watershed. In general, designating all areas above the base elevation as mountain regions will include watersheds for much of the county's water supply, many of the steep slopes which are subject to erosion, and highly visible areas of natural beauty. However, the bill provides that the hearing authority may include additional land at lower elevation or exempt land situated above the base elevation if necessary to accomplish the purposes of the act. This flexibility meets the needs of those towns which complain that protecting only the top half of their mountains is not going to protect enough area. On the other hand, certain towns may wish to exclude land situated above the base elevation. The provisions for exclusion are particularly important to those towns which are located in relatively high but flat areas of the county, such as Becket, and my own town of Dalton.

"The boundaries of mountain regions would be adopted by the city council in a city, or town meeting in a town. After the mountain regions have been established, any person who wishes to remove, fill, excavate or alter land in the region must file written notice of this proposed activity with the conservation commission. This requirement does not apply to existing structures, present uses of land, prior approved subdivisions, or land used for lumbering.

"After receiving notice from the applicant, the conservation commission will determine whether the proposed activity may permanently alter the mountain region. If so, the conservation commission will hold a public hearing; if not, the applicant will receive an order which allows him to begin his project.

"If a hearing is held, the conservation commission will consider the potential impact of the activity on the mountain region and may impose conditions to protect public or private water supply, to prevent erosion, to facilitate flood control, or preserve the natural scenic qualities of the mountain regions.

"The scenic mountains bill is the product of months of study and research by the BNRC and consultants hired by the council. It has been written to incorporate the suggestions of the residents in Berkshire County and throughout the Commonwealth."

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACT

To illustrate how the act will be implemented, a map depicting the proposed mountain regions of Lenox is shown in Figure 2. Included within the scenic mountains region are watershed lands which serve Lenox's public water supply (double-crosshatched). This map is preliminary only and was developed using the combined efforts of the BNRC, the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, and the Town Counsel of Lenox.

Elevations were used as much as possible to define the mountain regions. Soil information was especially valuable in determining the boundaries. The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) *General Soils Report, Berkshire County, Massachusetts* was used for this purpose. (See Figure 3).

The criteria used to select boundaries were designed to

include watersheds serving public water supply, steep slopes, highly erosive, shallow soils and — as important as any other criterion — a popularly held belief that the boundaries did indeed define the "mountain region."

The soil survey showed 2 soil types (types 10 and 11 on Figure 3) which delineated shallow soils and steep slopes. The SCS defined general soil area 10 as "shallow to bedrock soils and deep, well drained and moderately well drained, stony soils, with hardpans, on uplands with slopes greater than 15 percent." General soil area is defined as "shallow to bedrock soils and deep, well drained and moderately well drained, stony soils, with hardpans on uplands with slopes less than 15 percent."

In an effort to obtain further information concerning the use of soil data, the Pittsfield SCS office was contacted. Richard Scanu, soil scientist with SCS explained that "generally in Lenox, soil area 10 included steep slopes which were shallow to bedrock and highly erosive (especially so, on the steepest slopes). In this soil area there are some inclusions of deeper soils, but these have a hardpan which restricts vertical movement of water. Soil area 11," he said, "had the same problems except that soils were not as steep. Both of these soil areas are severely limiting in terms of intensive development and should be avoided."

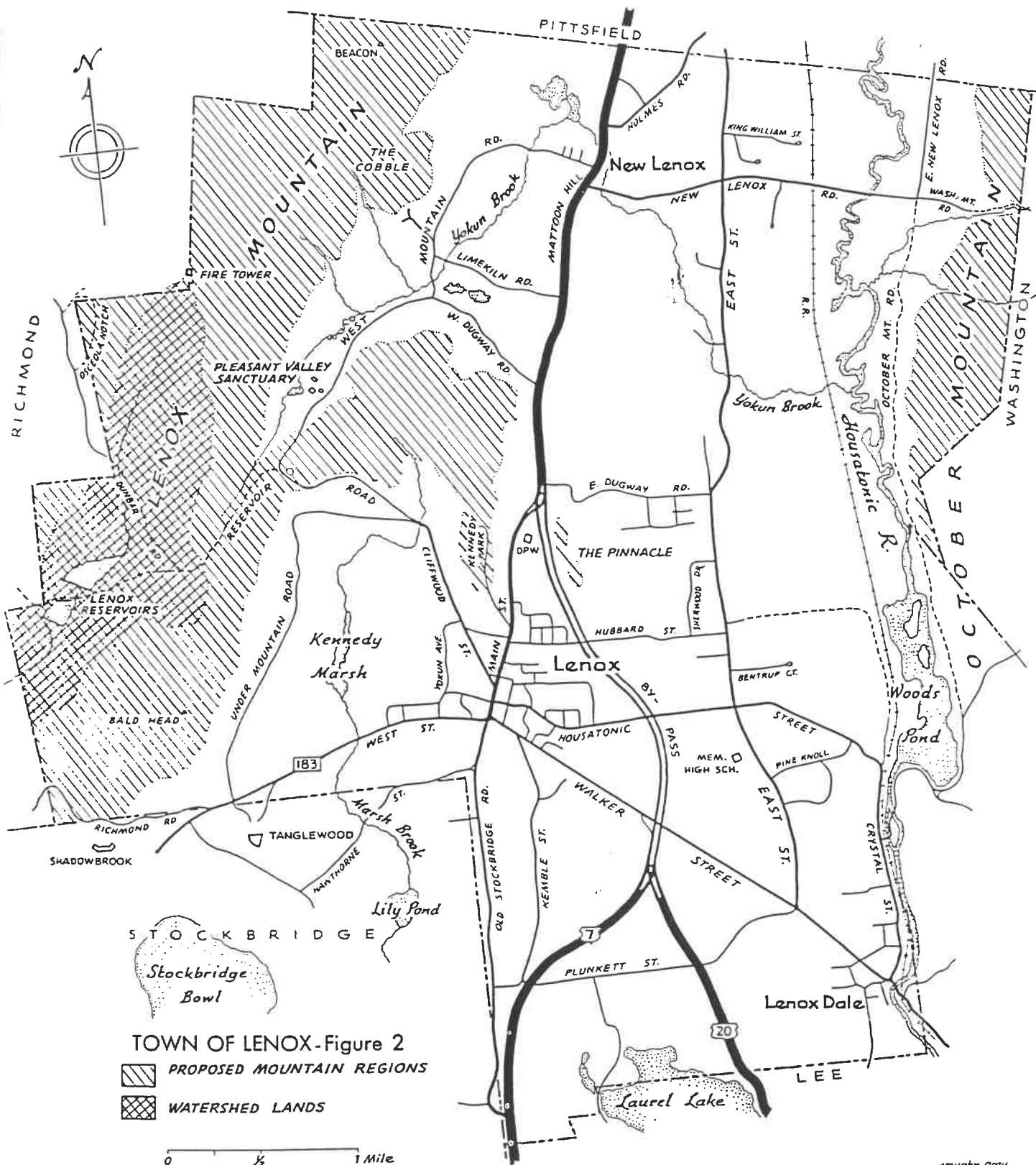
With this information in hand, the group chose 1250 — 1400 feet as the elevation criterion for the Taconic Range. Again, the specific contour used in any given area depended on the soil conditions encountered (according to the soil survey), the presence of a watershed serving a public water supply, and whether the area could reasonably be determined mountainous. The Taconic Range is in the west part of town and is locally known as Lenox Mountain. On the east side of Lenox the elevation selected was 1100 — 1200 feet. Here again the contour line delineated areas having steep slopes and shallow soils. This area included October Mountain and is, incidentally, part of the southern extension of the Green Mountains.

THE FUTURE

For the further implementation of the act, model regulations are being drafted now by the BNRC for use by Berkshire towns. Funds were made available for this purpose by the Boston based *Fund for the Preservation of Wildlife and Natural Areas*. These are expected to be available in late March and again, the public forum will be used to incorporate conservation commission ideas into the final version.

The act itself may be in for a slight overhaul soon. Mr. Wislocki has proposed minor amendments which will be acted on in the next legislative session. The most needed amendments though, according to Mr. George Darey, Lenox Conservation Commission chairman, concern the requirement of a two-thirds vote at town meetings and the placing of utilities on the exempted list. He sees a simple majority requirement as more reasonable and favors inclusion of "utilities' mountain activities" within the jurisdiction of the act.

The Berkshires are a unique visual asset to the Commonwealth, so unique in fact, that the visual amenities can be translated into economic benefits. This is especially true when one considers that each tourism season in the Berkshires, summer, fall and winter, is based to a greater or



vaughn gray

er degree on the mountains. As many have said before.
od ecology is good economics."

his act recognizes the sensitive nature of mountain land-
pes with their steep slopes, shallow and highly erosive
s, fragile vegetative communities, watershed values, and
ic qualities. With luck, local political authorities galvan-
by individual initiative, will consider the act a welcome
lition to the meager arsenal of protective devices available
conservation in Massachusetts.

opies of the Scenic Mountains Act, implementation guidelines
nd the regulations (pending) may be obtained from George
S. Wislocki, Executive Director, Berkshire Natural Resources
Council, 8 Bank Row, Pittsfield, Ma. 01201.

Correction: Vol. XI, September, 1974, No. 3, pg. 2 . . . the
Caratunk Wildlife Refuge at Seekonk owned by Massachusetts
Audubon Society should read: . . . the Caratunk Wildlife Re-
fuge at Seekonk owned by The Caratunk Wildlife Trust and
managed and operated by The Audubon Society of Rhode
Island.

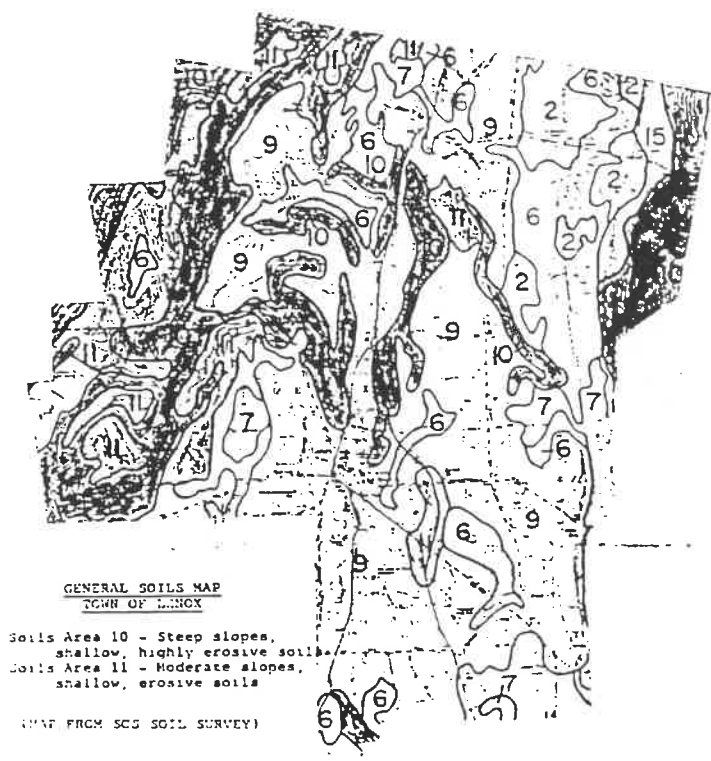


Figure 3

atorial Board: Regional Community Resource Development Spe-
cialists: Arnold C. Lane, Cape Cod Extension Service, Deeds and
Probate Building, Railroad Avenue, Barnstable 02630; Warren E.
Archey and Dick L. Boyce, Berkshire County Extension Service,
34 Summer Street, Pittsfield 01201; Pardon W. Cornell, Bristol
County Agricultural High School, Center Street, Segreganset
02773; Ralph H. Goodno, Essex Agricultural and Technical In-
stitute, 562 Maple Street, Hawthorne 01937; H. Peter Wood,
Franklin County Extension Service, Court House, 425 Main St.,
Greenfield 01301; Christos C. Mpelkas, Norfolk County Agri-

cultural High School, 460 Main Street, Walpole 02081; Michael
V. Sikora, Plymouth County Extension Service, High Street, Han-
son 02341; Lewis A. Hodgkinson and Frederick B. Giebel,
Worcester County Extension Service, 36 Harvard Street, Worces-
ter 01608 and Regional Community Resource Development
Agents Thaddeus J. Kuczewski, Bristol County Agricultural High
School, Center Street, Segreganset 02773 and James T. Williams,
Middlesex County Extension Service, 105 Everett Street, Concord
01742; John H. Noyes, Department of Forestry and Wildlife
Management, Univ. of Massachusetts, Amherst 01002, Editor.

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University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

A. A. Spielman
Director

Cooperative Agricultural Extension work
Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914

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